

PEOPLE'S STORY OF SOVIET RUSSIA

*The Land, The People, and
Why They Fight*

By the same author

THE RUSSIAN LAND

LENIN THE MAN AND HIS WORK

THROUGH THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

THE SOVIETS

People's Story of S O V I E T R U S S I A

by

A. R. WILLIAMS

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PREFACE

For a long time the question was, "How will the Russians fight?" That question has been answered on a hundred battlefields, from the White Sea to Stalingrad and the Caucasus. If all the superlatives lavished on the fighting Russians by Allied statesmen and soldiers were transformed into guns and munitions, they would already be victorious.

From "How will they fight?" the question turns to "Why do they fight?" and "What are they fighting for?" and "What will they do after the fighting is over?"

To answer these questions requires a background understanding of the Russian land, the people, their institutions and ideas—what they have achieved in the past twenty-five years and what they hope to achieve in the future. It is the aim of this book to supply this understanding, as briefly and as simply as possible. Some parts of it make use of material from my earlier and larger volume, *The Soviets*; all of it is based on my observations of Russia and the Russians over the past twenty-five years.

For constant help in gathering this material I am indebted to Lucita Squier and to many Russians from Kalinin to the exceedingly wise old peasant Yarkov in his village on the Moscow River. Among others to whom I am indebted are the staff of the American-Russian Institute, Professor Alexander Kaun of the University of California, Professor H. H. Fisher of the Hoover War Library, and most of all to Dorothy Erskine of San Francisco.

A. R. W.

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PEOPLE'S STORY OF SOVIET RUSSIA

*The Land, The People, and
Why They Fight*

1. WHY THE RUSSIANS FIGHT

One day some years ago when I was plodding along the dusty roads back from the Volga, clad in an old Russian blouse and sandals, a peasant gave me a lift in his wagon. After some conversation in Russian, his curiosity was aroused. Usually a stranger shows by his accent from what province in Russia he comes. My accent is 100 per cent mid-west American—like nothing he had ever heard before. Puzzled, but polite, he queried :

“ May I ask, *tovarisch*, from what province you might be coming ? ”

“ From the biggest and the richest in the world,” I replied vaingloriously. “ From America.”

Pausing a moment as he eyed my shabby clothes and shoes, he remarked softly, “ So you’re from the richest province in the world, eh ? And now, may I ask, *tovarisch*, how much of those riches belong to you ? What have you got out of it ? ”

This question about America is one often asked today about Russia—especially today. What have the people gotten out of their Revolution ? What is it they are fighting for ?

For a correct appraisal one should list both Russia’s successes and failures and strike a balance between the good and the bad. The tendency, however, in the case of a country which challenges or shocks many of our long-cherished ideas and beliefs, is to emphasize its negative sides. And it is easier, too, to dramatize evil than virtue. One could discourse endlessly on what one doesn’t like in Russia—from two kinds of cold water in the taps to bureaucrats, purges and repressions.

Not by its negative aspects, however, can one explain or evaluate the Soviet Union—or any other nation or people.

America has probably delivered the greatest measure of well-being to the greatest number of people of any country in the history of the world. But one could get no concept of that by focusing on gangsters, suicides, unemployed. Neither can one get any conception of the strength and spirit of the Soviets by concentrating upon their dark sides. Yet that is what the public were doing for the past few years, up to the war. They knew little about Soviet achievements; a great deal about Soviet follies, failures, cruelties.

With this one-sided, distorted picture, no wonder Americans were amazed by the turn of events in Russia. They had come to believe that the country, hopelessly disorganized, was infested with Quislings and traitors. Then they saw the Soviet standing up almost single-handed to the assault of those German armies which in the last war was borne by the land forces of five Great Powers.

They had come to believe that the Soviets were on the road leading back to the Middle Ages and barbarism. Then they were told by leaders like General MacArthur and Lord Beaverbrook that the hopes of civilization rest upon the banners of the Red Army.

They had come to believe that the Soviet people were cowed and spiritless or, seething with rebellion, were ready to rise up and welcome the invader. Then they heard Winston Churchill calling upon the British public to emulate the devotion and loyalty of the Soviet peoples to their leaders and government. They saw almost every Russian man, woman and child working or fighting in defence of their country, vindicating that statement of Voroshilov, "Our soldiers are all the Soviet people."

What is the source of this morale and endurance? Hard put to explain, some "experts" conjure up the celebrated Russian soul, which is supposed to perform in strange, unaccountable ways. Or they ascribe it to a mystic devotion to the Russian soil. True, in the Russians, as in other people, there is a streak of mysticism, as will be apparent later. But

above all, the Russians are realists. We are on safer, surer grounds at the outset in tracing the source of this high morale to certain concrete, tangible things.

Apply that formula of the old Volga peasant to the Soviet people—the average worker, farmer, soldier. What is it that the Revolution has given him to fight for? Or rather, what has he achieved for himself through the Revolution?

First—the 250,000 collective farms equipped with modern machinery and power, in which all members have a stake and share.

Second—the practical disappearance of racial and national antagonism among Jews, Russians, Tatars, Armenians, and 185 other peoples now enjoying equal rights and privileges.

Third—an ever-expanding economy, creating a ceaseless demand for more and more technicians, foremen, engineers, chemists, architects, teachers, journalists, physicians.

Fourth—the extensive system of schools, colleges, technicums, training the youth for these positions. Teaching 50 million illiterates to read and write; publishing over 30,000 new book titles each year.

Fifth—the emancipation of women from old sex taboos and disabilities of the past—all positions and professions now open to them on the same terms as men; establishing a nation-wide system of nurseries and kindergartens.

Sixth—the practical eliminations of those scourges of cholera, smallpox, and typhus that once ravaged the country.

Seventh—abolition of unemployment, with the right of every citizen to work, education, and leisure written into the Constitution.

Eighth—the system of insurance against accident, illness, and old age, liberating the people from the fear and dread of want.

Ninth—the elimination of crises and depressions by striking a balance between production and consumption—putting the money into the pockets of the people to buy back the goods they they make as fast as they can make them.

Tenth—a system of planning, working toward an ordered, wasteless development of the nation's resources.

This is a creditable list of achievements. They explain what the Russians are fighting for. Still, they don't explain why they are fighting so fiercely and so well. After all, we have most of these things—schools, mammoth power stations, marvellous machines, the wonders of science—and we have had them for a long time. We enjoy, too, certain comforts, luxuries, privileges, and freedoms which the majority of Soviet people have hardly dreamed of. There is nothing inexplicable about this. For the last two decades the Soviets have been getting ready for this evil day now come upon them. Their chief resources and energies have gone into the building of giant enterprises—synthetic rubber plants, a vast complex of blast furnaces, steel mills for rails and cannon, power plants producing billions of kilowatts.

Unfortunately, one can't sleep in blast furnaces, eat cannon, or dress in kilowatts. So the Soviet people have not received many direct returns for all their sacrifices and privations. In terms of food, clothes, and shelter—except for our poorest and unemployed—Americans enjoy a higher standard of living. So did the citizens of France, Holland, Belgium. But in the face of the Nazi invasion, they didn't blow up their factories, burn down their houses, join guerilla bands, knowing that they were doomed to death or torture if captured. They didn't show, in the words of President Roosevelt, that "almost super-human courage and will-power of the Russians."

Evidently, then, something more than just the material gains and achievements of the Revolution is back of this fighting spirit, this readiness to undergo every peril and hardship, which Tolstoy in *War and Peace* calls the unknown quantity, x . It is made up of a number of things. Love of the Russian land and its great expanses. Hatred against the invaders for ravaging their country and inflicting untold

cruelties and sufferings on defenceless people. Pride in the names of their national heroes—Alexander Nevsky, Suvorov, Pushkin, Kutuzov, Pugachev, Gorky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Lenin. Feeling of outrage against Nazi desecration of the national shrines of Tolstoy and Tchaikowsky. The whole complex of ideas, interests, and emotions that go under the name of patriotism.

To all these must be added one more—the feeling the Soviet people have of being engaged in a great and significant adventure. They believe—rightly or wrongly—that they are working toward a society without poverty, ignorance, strife between classes and nations. They really believe that. It was with this aim that they began their revolution twenty-five years ago.

As an eye-witness of that momentous event, I saw Lenin, climbing to the platform of Smolny and stilling the thunderous ovation of the delegates, quietly say, "We will now take up the business of building the Socialistic State." I saw Dibenko with his battalions of tattered Red Guards and sailors storming the gates of the Winter Palace. I saw the mob with torches crashing into the courtyard of the telephone station to kill the Junkers who had twice betrayed them.

But most poignant, and deepest etched in my memory, is the gaunt, ill-clad figure of a soldier beside a campfire in the falling snow, guarding the gates of Smolny. Past him hurried the thousand grim-faced delegates from the trenches, farms and factories. Out of the distance came the rumble of guns of the Revolution, proclaiming the fall of the old order.

"*V chem delo?*" we asked him. "What's it all about?"

He muttered some monosyllables about the "cursed war, hunger and cold." Then, turning so the flames lighted up his careworn, emaciated face, he thrust forth his arms in a gesture at once of protest and appeal, exclaiming: "The world needs bread. The world needs happiness."

It was with this faith that somehow they could build a

society with bread and happiness, not for one race or people, but for all, that they began their Revolution. And they tenaciously hold to it today. No one has ever seen this good society. There is little evidence of it today in the world—or in Russia. But faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. In spite of tragic set-backs, betrayals, blunders, defeats, and disappointments, this faith is a powerful driving force in their lives today.

This ideal of the good society, of course, is not unique with the Russians. One finds it in Robert Ingersoll's *Vision of the Future*; in the writer of Revelation, who saw a new heaven coming down to earth; in the poet Blake, who would build "Jerusalem on England's green and pleasant land." What is unique is that in Russia this dream which has haunted the minds of the poets and seers is a moving force in the man of the street, the factory, and the village. It is the goal of a great body of hard-working men and women informed with an understanding of social laws and forces and with a programme they believe will realize it.

One finds it cropping up in the most unexpected people—in this foreman who looks like a hard-fisted labour-driving boss; the director of a big department store; the gaunt woman heading a collective farm; a teacher in the Siberian forest. There in the Urals is Peter Petrovich, a tireless, sleepless miracle of a man, sixteen hours a day on the job, doing the work of three men. Tell him to stop, to rest, or he will drop dead in his tracks. "And what if I do?" he laughs. "Then I will have a long rest, and over my grave they may say, 'Here lies Engineer Peter Petrovich, who died at his post, doing his duty for the cause.'"

Peter Petrovich is a young man, and there is another clue to the secret of why the Russians fight. For Russia is a nation of youth, with all that implies of vitality, idealism, and courage. Almost two-thirds of the population are under thirty years of age, as against half or less that proportion in England and France.

In the age group, sixteen to thirty, are almost 50 millions, providing the country with an immense storehouse of human energy. And this it most decidedly does. Everywhere one finds youth placed in the highest, most responsible positions. A fourth (284) of the deputies to the Supreme Soviet are less than thirty years old; four-fifths of the explorers, engineers, and scientists who conquered the Arctic; almost all the 313 decorated "Hero of the Soviet Union" in the first year of war.

In many ways this Soviet youth—sport-, air-, and machine-minded—resemble the youth in the West. In one respect they are different. Growing up in a socialist land, most of them have never seen a capitalist or landlord, and hardly know what one looks like. Politically-minded and active, they have taken a leading part in every Soviet campaign: collectivizing the farms; coaching the 100 million voters in the use of the ballot; training pilots, parachutists. ("We must be a generation of winged people, the best fliers in the world.") Likewise in industry they have initiated those movements for increasing the output of labour: the "shock brigades" in which one group of workers sets itself against another group in turning out the most steel, tanks, shoes; the "Stakhanovites," who broke records by making the most effective use of tools and time. And then, to meet the terrific demands of war, within a week after the Nazis crossed the frontier, rose the "200 Percenters," pledging to stick to their jobs in shop or factory until they doubled their quotas. And alongside of them came the *Voskresniks* ("Sundayings"), with millions donating their rest day to cope with some emergency—gathering a harvest endangered by frost, flood, or enemy, building barricades and tank-traps, digging a blizzard-bound train out of the snow drifts.

On the Red Square in Moscow I have heard hundreds of youth in leather jackets about to see forth for a big construction job in Siberia singing in unison:

We are building our new world,
We are building our world anew.

To how many of them is this ideal a vital reality? With few probably is it a dominant motive. On the other hand very few are entirely unaffected by it. In any organization or movement, it is always the zealous few who carry the load from under which the others slip. My father, a clergyman, used to tell his congregation that ten per cent were pillars of the church and the rest were caterpillars.

This Soviet youth likewise has its due share of slackers, loafers, time-servers. But in justice to them it must be said that they have not been merely singing about a new world, they have been building it.

It is this spirit that impels the Russians today as in the past twenty-five years to do so many things deemed impossible. Because of it they are driven to deeds that are heroic and magnificent. And by the same token it has driven them at times to do things that were harsh and cruel. Unsparing of themselves, they have not been sparing of others. In pursuit of an ideal, ruthlessly they have swept aside those who stood in its way; the means justified in their minds by the great goal toward which they were driving.

Call this social passion, or call it religion—as Bernard Shaw did to Stalin’s amazement—it is a factor that must be reckoned with. One may see the new socialist schools and cities, all the giants of the Five-Year Plans, the tank and cannon works. But if one misses this, it is, as the Russians say, like “going to the circus and not seeing the elephant.” Yet it is easy enough to miss. For these youths do not wear their hearts on their sleeves. Those possessed by a social vision are not given to talking about it. It is an intangible thing, not set down in diagrams, charts, and figures.

That is the reason the economists and experts have so often been led astray. They did not sense this ideal or, priding themselves on being hard-headed, waved it aside as irrelevant. They said, “Give us not ideals, but facts, realities.” The strength of a country they determine solely by its economic and military potential—in terms of steel, coal, and kilo-

watts. That's where they have reckoned wrongly. That's where the Nazis likewise went astray. That's why those repeated predictions of the last twenty-five years about Soviet disaster, defeat, and downfall have come to naught. For to the Soviet people this dream of a good society of plenty, justice, and freedom is very much of a reality. A fact that explains so many things otherwise inexplicable. And so important is it that in this book, which is primarily a book of facts, it is put here at the beginning.

2. THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

The astronomer Alexander von Humboldt once pointed out that in area Russia is as large as the visible surface of the full moon. It covers 8,350,000 square miles—almost a sixth of the land surface of the earth—larger than the combined area of the United States, Canada, and Central America. As night falls on the western edge of this great Eurasian plain, it is already daybreak on its eastern borders. The Red Armies facing the Japanese at Vladivostok are closer to Seattle than they are to their capital, Moscow. If there are grounds for the building of socialism in one country, it is in the Soviet Union. In the words of an old peasant proverb, "Russia is not a country—it is a world."

Who are the peoples of this "world"?

Almost every colour, blood, and type is represented in the vast congeries of 189 races and peoples that comprise the Soviet Union. Thus the word *Russian* covers a multitude of skins. Out of the population, however, of 193 millions, increasing at twice the rate of the rest of Europe, about three-quarters are Slavs, divided into three main branches speaking separate and distinct languages.

The 10 million *Belorussian* or *White Russians*, blue-eyed and fair-skinned, holding the marches to the west, are closest to the original Slavic stock. Low-lying and marshy, the country is intersected by rivers like the Berezina on whose breaking ice so many of Napoleon's troops perished in 1812. Under the Soviets, its marshes were turned into wide fields of hemp, flax and koksagyz, the new rubber-bearing plant. Its peat bogs furnished electricity for the glass-walled factories of Orsha. The old Ghetto-ridden towns of Minsk and Gomel became

modern cities. Unfortunately on the classic invasion road to Moscow, its cities and farms, bearing the first assaults of the Nazi armies, are now pillaged and burned, and 300,000 of its people have been killed by the Nazis in the most sweeping civilian massacres in Europe.

The 35 million *Ukrainians* or *Little Russians*, as they were once called, usually taller than other Slavs and dark-haired, are important in themselves and for the land they occupy. Here is the celebrated Black Earth, a humus of decomposed steppe grass, in some places six feet deep. From it came a fifth of the grain of the Soviet Union, two-thirds of the sugar, while everywhere the villages of white-washed cottages are embedded in orchards and gardens. Comprising but a fiftieth of the total area of the country, the Ukraine, prior to this war, was producing a fifth of its chemicals, half its salt, half its coal, and three-fifths of its iron. Proud of their past—for Kiev, their beautiful capital, is the mother of all Russian towns—hard-working, fond of music and dancing, the Ukrainians are withal a fighting people. They had to be, for Ukraine means borderland, and for centuries it had to withstand the first shocks of invading Tatars, Turks, and Germans.

Out of this conflict grew up a special warrior caste—the Cossacks. They rode the banks of the Dnieper and the Don armed with swords and whips of leather thongs tipped with steel. To their half-Arab horses, the Cossack regiment of today have now added “flying horses,”—planes, and iron horses,”—tanks. Hard-riding, fearless always in the thickest of the fray, striking with lightning swiftness in front or rear, the Cossacks today, as in the past, are the red terror of their enemies.

The 100 million *Great Russians*, with Scandinavian, Tatar and Finnish elements in their blood stream, were pre-eminently conquerors, pioneers, and colonizers. Having established Tsarism and the Patriarchate in Moscow, they pushed the frontiers of the Empire out to the Pacific and down to the

gates of Iran. For more than three centuries Russia added to its domains at the rate of sixty square miles a day, steadily bringing new lands and races under the imperial tricolour.

In this immense territory, inherited by the Soviets, live 189 different peoples, speaking 150 different languages and adhering to 40 different religions. Pre-eminent among the non-Slavic races are :

The People of the Caucasus. Here, isolated from the world and each other by barriers of ice and granite, some 30 races, numbering about 6 million, still cling to the traditions and customs of their ancestors—reaching back to the legendary ages. Across this land rode the conquering armies of the world—the Roman legions, the hosts of Persia and Macedonia, the Mongols and the Crusaders. In the nineteenth century for sixty years those highlanders, under leaders like Shamil, “The Thunder Bolt,” held out against the Russian armies pushing up the valleys.

This warring past is reflected in the ruins of fortresses, in the national costume with rows of cartridges across the breast and a gleaming dagger at the belt, and in the blood-feuds that till recently raged in the mountains. Ceaseless conflict with human forces and with nature has made these people sinewy, resourceful, and adroit. At the same time they are singularly courteous and hospitable—lovers of music, dancing, feasting, and of wine, “red blood of the earth,” that flows from the vineyards in the fertile valleys. They glorify their glamorous past in poetry and song, and deftly fashion copper and silver into objects of beauty and weapons incrusting with jewels.

Among the swarms of people in this human hive, best known in the west are 2 million *Atmenians*. They are an offshoot of the ancient Hittites and have inhabited their country since prehistoric times. Poverty-stricken and subjected to hideous massacres by Turks and Kurds, for centuries they have gazed wistfully back to a Golden Age of

peace and prosperity under Ashod the First. Now, with a chain of power plants near the cascades descending from mile-high Lake Sevan, with a system of irrigation canals making its once arid lands blossom with cotton and vineyards, lemons and figs, with new mines, tufa quarries, schools and theatres opening on every hand, Soviet Armenia looks confidently to the future.

Another highly cultured people are 2 million *Georgians* who were Christianized five centuries before the Anglo-Saxons by Saint Nina of the grapevine cross. Four centuries before Shakespeare was born, Rustaveli wrote their national epic, "The Man in the Panther's Skin"; and a noble architecture arose under David the Builder and the great Queen Tamara. Cultured and valorous as this little country was, it could not withstand the pressure of the Russian colossus reaching down from the North, and Georgia became a vassal of the Tsars.

But the liberty-loving mountaineers kept up an incessant guerrilla struggle against autocracy in all its forms. Schooled in revolution, and with a flair for politics evolved through centuries of dealing with all kinds of states and rulers, the Georgians have developed a grasp of statecraft that amounts to genius. With forty languages spoken in its streets, Tbilisi (Tiflis), the capital, is one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the world. There in its theological seminary, Stalin studied for the priesthood. High up in the mountains at Gori is the little house in which he was born and grew up as a boy—now preserved as a museum.

Around Mount Elbruz, the highest peak in Europe, live the *Kabardins*, the aristocrats of the mountains beside whose radium-active mineral springs rise a complex of spas, sanitariums and health resorts. On the sun- and rain-drenched coast the *Abkhazians* raise tangerines, tea, pomegranates and centenarians. There are many authenticated cases of men still vigorous at the age of 110 or 120. Here, too, are villages of African *Negroes*, descendants of the slaves bought in the mar-

kets of the East. Nearby are the *Circassians*, whose women were once celebrated big-eyed beauties of the Turkish harems.

Most primitive are the *Khevsurs*, who until recently wore medieval helmets, chain armor and white Frankish crosses on their costumes. They are reputed to be descendants of a band of Crusaders driven into the mountains and absorbed by the natives who gave them sanctuary: To them, fleeing for their lives, have come refugees of all stripes, from Monarchists to Bolsheviks, always sure of finding a safe asylum.

Not less eclectic were the *Khevsurs* in matters of religion. They observed the Sunday of the Christians, the Saturday of the Jews, and the Friday of the Mohammedans—as well as their ancient pagan festivals. Between holidays they got drunk, stole sheep, held up travellers on the high passes. Like most mountaineers, they were inordinately proud—quick with knife or trigger to avenge insult or defend their honour.

I got along so well with the *Khevsurs* that one of the head men, Gorbodully, declared that I had in me the makings of a good *Khevsur* and he was prepared to induct me into the tribe.

“A simple rite,” said Gorbodully, as he drew from his belt a *kinjal*, a curved silver dagger that the *Khevsurs* always carry. “I make a slit in your middle finger and in mine. We put the two fingers together, and as the two blood streams are united, you become our blood brother.”

I could think of better things than being slit with a dagger to let some mountain-brigand blood into my veins. But far away in the mountains one doesn't say such things—not to a proud *Khevsur* with a gleaming dagger in hand and a gleaming look in his eye.

There was nothing to do except let Gorbodully pink me—which he did very deftly. With the mumbling of some strange cabalistic words, he proclaimed me a full-fledged *Khevsur* with all rights and duties appertaining thereto. “We

are blood-brothers now," he declared. "We have all things in common."

I feared something like being called upon to deliver up my good gold watch in exchange for a stolen Khevsur sheep. But my suspicions were base and unfounded. This was a brotherhood on an infinitely higher plane. Never more need I take umbrage from anybody. "The slightest insult to you," declared Gorbodully, "and the Khevsurs will rise up as one man to avenge you. And we will go anywhere in the world to do it," he added magnificently.

Near the Khevsurs, in a granite cauldron ringed about by glaciers and eight peaks higher than Mont Blanc, lie the white gleaming houses of the *Svans*, each with its lofty massive tower into which the family fled for refuge when raiders rode over the high passes.

Along the Caspian Sea are the 2 million *Azerbaijanians*, guardians of the enormous reservoirs of oil and caverns of gas beneath. Their country was once known as the "Land of Fire," and till recently in the Temple of the Fire-Worshippers burned the eternal flame fed by gas from these caverns underground. These are the riches above all else that the Nazis most need and covet; but if their armies come close to them, the oil wells will be flooded, pipe lines torn up, and the forest of derricks turned into an inferno of flames. By origin and by religion—for they are Moslems—these people belong to the next grouping.

The *Turco-Tatars*, numbering 18 million, are mostly descendants of the hordes which 700 years ago swept out of Asia, led by Tamerlane and Genghis Khan, "Emperor of All Men," who declared that "as there is but one Ruler in heaven, so there should be but one on earth." And like Hitler, he proposed to be that one. After crashing the gates of Europe, they fell back to Central Asia to pasture their flocks and herds on the steppes; to mingle their blood with the native

stock; and for 300 years from their strongholds along the Volga, to levy tribute on the Russians.

Largely followers of Islam, with its fatalism inclining them to passivity, they have been quiescent for centuries. But in their veins runs the blood of conquerors, statesmen and administrators. Now it has been roused and quickened by the Revolution. From Mecca their youths have turned to Moscow, and the world is feeling again the powerful impact of these peoples.

Most numerous of the Turco-Tatars are the *Uzbeks* who built Holy Bokhara—from whose highest minaret, the Tower of Death, heretics and law-breakers were hurled 200 feet to the pavement below—and Samarkand with its Registan, called by Lord Curzon “the most impressive public square in the world.” Now above the tinkling of the camel bells and the wailing of old men around the tomb of Tamerlane, ring the songs of the shock-brigades marching out to make the sandy wastes grow cotton, the “white gold” of Uzbekistan.

Nearby roam the 3 million supple, sport- and laughter-loving *Kazakhs*, delighting in hunting and hawking. With new industries and implements these nomads are fast becoming mechanics and farmers—a process greatly accelerated by the war. Scores of mills and factories were brought here to save them from the advancing Nazis. Tens of thousands of acres of steppe-land are sown with wheat and sugar beets to compensate for areas lost in the West. The old silk-and-tea route from Alma-Ata is now a life-line of China. Over it for the last five years have gone Soviet guns and munitions for the hard-pressed Chinese armies. Now it is carrying lend-lease supplies coming up from the Persian Gulf and India.

Along the Chinese frontier dwell the *Kirghiz*, grazing their fat-tailed sheep upon the flatlands till the plains wither up under the blazing sun. Then, over the same trails beaten by their ancestors a thousand years ago, they drive their great flocks up to the cool springs and succulent grass of the mountain meadows.

North to the Urals, the *Bashkirs* ferment the milk of their mares into an invigorating drink, known as *koumis*, which once helped save the life of Tolstoy. To show their guest that a goat or sheep is perfect, they cut its throat in his presence, cook it whole, and tear it to pieces with their hands as they feast squat-legged on the earth. Occasionally, the bey ceremoniously thrusts into the mouth of the guest a choice morsel—like a cold boiled eye. Occupying the enormous basin of the Lena are the gifted *Yakuts*, who prefer to clear the forests for tillage rather than to hunt in them.

Most cultured are the descendants of the Golden Horde, the *Tatars* of the Volga. Like other Moslems, they jealously guarded their women, but allowed them leisure for the graces of living and the arts of seduction. Even in remote villages, twenty years ago, I saw Tatar girls with eyebrows pencilled black, with henna or vermilion-tinted fingernails, bringing water from the well.

The *Finno-Ugrians* were the original masters of the northern forests and fenlands of Russia. Among them are the 252,000 *Karelians* in whose runes or rhapsodic ballads, the Kalevala, Longfellow found the rhythm for "Hiawatha." Along the valleys of the rivers whose names begin with *V*—the Vetluga, Vyatka, Vychegda and Upper Volga—are the *Mordvins*, the *Mari*, the *Votiaks*, *Zyrians* and *Permians*.

Besides the four main divisions—Slavs, Caucasians, Turco-Tatars and Finno-Ugrians—there are 4 million *Jews*, ranging from the silk-weaving Jews of Bokhara to the so-called Mountain Jews claiming descent from one of the ten lost tribes of Israel. Before anyone ever heard of Russians or Tsars, the Jews were in Russia. In the eighth century the rulers of the powerful *Khazars* were converted to Judaism, establishing a regime tolerant of all religions. Their tutors were possibly the ancestors of the present Crimean Jews, who disclaim responsibility for the crucifixion as they were settled in the land before Jesus was born. All told they number less than

100,000 as against some 4 million Jews who speak Yiddish—a Germanic vernacular written with Hebrew letters. Under the Tsar the latter group were largely confined to a Pale of Settlement in certain provinces; and within this pale, another pale was created by expelling them from the villages. They were not allowed to own or lease land, to be officers in the army, or to enter branches of government service, like the railways and the postal and telegraph services as these were state-owned. On a limited quota basis their children were admitted to the schools, while Jewish girl students sometimes resorted to the “yellow passport” of the prostitute in order to reside in the university towns.

In spite of all handicaps, through loopholes in the law, bribery of officials, submitting to Christian baptism, and by sheer ability, great numbers of Jews became doctors, lawyers, bankers, and owners of factories. Under the “liberal” Tsars, life, too, became more tolerable for them, thanks to the lifting of certain regulations and laxity in enforcing the law. But again the offensive would be resumed, with repressions and pogroms which raised indignant protests from such leaders as Tolstoy, James Bryce, and Cardinal Manning. But this had no effect on the imperial attitude as reflected by Pobyedonostsev, Procurator of the Holy Synod. He advocated a policy that would “convert a third of the Jews to Christianity, destroy another third by starvation, and drive the last third into emigration.”

The *Germans*, numbering 1,400,000, are largely descendants of the artisans and farmers who were first imported by Peter the Great and Catherine in order to infect the peasants with German industry and order—but whose example was never very contagious. Clinging stubbornly to their German language and customs, they were never assimilated. As potential fifth columnists, when the Nazi armies were headed toward the Volga, they were shipped east to Siberia.

In the Pamirs live the dignified *Tajiks*, fanatical Moslems, their eyes frequently as blue as any Nordic's for they spring

from the same stock as the English, Swede and Germans. In the Altai are the *Oirots*, described in the travels of Marco Polo, who seem to be closely related to the American Indians. Farther on are the pure slant-eyed moon-faced *Mon-gols*, mostly Buddhists, like the *Burait*s, whose lamas from sunset to sunrise engage in cycles of disputes upon the problems of life.

All kinds of people, representing all levels of culture at all stages of social evolution: from the Paleo-Asiatic tribes of Kamchatka, just emerging from the Stone Age, to the highly civilized *Estonians*, *Latvians* and *Lithuanians*; from the roving reindeer- and whale-hunting *Chuckhi* along the Arctic to the intensive soil-tilling *Ajarians* along the Black Sea.

Such a multiplicity of peoples, it is a well-nigh hopeless task to describe them all. In long journeys from the White Sea to the Caucasus I came to know the character and folkways of many of them fairly well—best of all, the peasants of Russia and the Ukraine before the coming of collective farms and in the years following. Uninterruptedly for a period of eighteen months I lived in Kvalinsk on the Volga, and the villages around it.

I took part in the field work through the cycle of the seasons from seed-time to harvesting. Followed the chanting priests with banners and booming bells, setting forth for the blessings of the crops and the river. Watched the last of the winter “wall-on-wall” fights with two lines of long-bearded *mujiks* battling until nightfall, then hailing the blood-sprinkled snow as augury of a good harvest to come. I rode with the People’s Judge on his circuit through the villages; sat with the commission examining recruits for the Red Army; was godfather at christenings; an honorary gravedigger at funerals.

After long sojourns in their villages, I came to have a deep respect and admiration for the peasants—their long-suffering patience in the face of adversity—their sense of humour and

their love of song—their unfailing hospitality toward the stranger—their sense of pity and compassion, so that they have no word for criminals, but call them the “unfortunates.” No wonder that Tolstoy advised the intelligentsia to sit at the feet of the peasants and learn some of their wisdom and ways. And Lenin would keep high officials waiting a full hour while he conversed with an old mujk. Primitive as were their villages, the peasants had a genuine and profound culture.

And Nazis speak of bringing culture and civilization to these people! It would be ludicrous if it were not so tragic. The old peasant in his straw-thatched hut—even before the days of collectivization—with hair on his face, mud on his boots, but with love of humanity in his heart, was fundamentally more cultured—in the real meaning of the word—than any Nazi storm-trooper.

Unfortunately, old Russia had its counterpart of the Nazis in the Black Hundreds. It had its arrogant racialists with the dictum: “The Russian nation is the only sovereign and ruling nation. Power in the State belongs to it alone.” Toward all other peoples in the country, their policy was that of compulsory Russification. Acquired by force, they were ruled by force. “One Tsar, one religion, one language!” Or in the more abstract formula, Autocracy, Orthodoxy, and Nationalism, meaning by the last, the culture, customs and institutions of the dominant race, the Great Russians. Sometimes there were gestures of liberality dictated by expediency. Then the Great Russian steam-roller resumed its onward course, trampling down and rooting out the culture, traditions, and languages of the subject races.

To insure docility and obedience, the old imperial state kept them, as it did the peasants of Russia, in a condition of abysmal ignorance and economic vassalage. With the old device of “divide and rule,” it fomented strife between Turks and Armenians, Poles and Ukrainians. It incited one against another and all against the Jews. It charged the Jews with

"ritual" murder, the use of Christian blood in Jewish religious ceremonies, made the masses believe that the Jews were the authors of their hardship and miseries. They were made the scapegoats in times of famine, pestilence and military defeat. The populace, inflamed against them by the Black Hundreds, was led into their quarters to slay, pillage, and burn.

In justification of the Tsarist national policy, it did hold together the motley concourse of tribes and nations within the bonds of Empire. But that was no organic unity. The peoples were subdued, but not assimilated. It was a peace maintained by the Cossack whip and sword. National passions and hatred of the oppressor, long-smouldering beneath the surface, awaited only the downfall of the Tsar to break out in conflagration. In the words of Dillon, the Roman Catholic expert on Russia: "The vast mosaic of nationalities, held together by violence, fraud and injustice, began to fall to pieces."

Through the centrifugal forces of the Revolution, first the states along the Baltic, then everywhere else, began detaching themselves from the centre. The great Eurasian plain extending across two continents threatened to break up into another Balkan Europe, crazy-quilted with a score of rival warring states, their frontiers bristling with bayonets and tariff walls. This was averted by a master stroke of statesmanship. How it put a stop to the process of disintegration and welded the many peoples into one nation presenting a solid unbroken front to the enemy is told in the following pages.

3. THE LEAGUE OF SOVIET NATIONS

In the winter of 1942 news despatches told of regiments of Siberians, Turcomans, Uzbeks, Tatars, fighting before Moscow with bravery, fury, and skill "such as Europe has hardly seen in a hundred years."

Now Moscow* is pre-eminently the city of the Great Russians. Their affection for it is reflected in numberless poems, stories, and sayings: "Mother Moscow!" "Above Moscow lies only the Kremlin, and above it only the stars."

One can understand why the Russians should fight fiercely in defence of their city. But why should dark-skinned peoples from their homes thousands of miles away? To answer that one must go back to a document signed by Lenin and Stalin on November 15, 1917—the *Declaration of Peoples' Rights*, assuring autonomy and self-determination to all peoples. This was a complete reversal of the old imperial system. The supremacy of the Great Russians was disavowed. No one people henceforth was to dominate another. To each was guaranteed the right to its own language, culture, and institutions. Subject races no longer, but equals, they were invited into a "free union of free peoples."

As the visible and outward sign of this change is the change in the name of the country. Instead of Russia, it is now the U.S.S.R.—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Just as the United States is a union of forty-eight states with its capital in Washington, the British Empire a Commonwealth of six nations with its capital in London, the U.S.S.R. is an alliance of sixteen Soviet Republics, with its capital in Moscow.

*For description of Moscow read: Moscow, the Proletarian city in Peace and War The Socialist Literature Publishing Co., Agra.

REPUBLIC	CAPITAL	AREA (sq. miles)	POPULATION (thousands)
Russia	Moscow	6,375,000	109,279
Ukraine	Kiev	202,540	38,960
Belorussia	Minsk	89,300	10,400
Uzbekistan	Tashkent	146,000	6,282
Turkmenia	Ashkhabad	171,250	1,254
Tajikistan	Stalinabad	55,545	1,485
Georgia	Tbilisi (Tiflis)	26,875	3,542
Armenia	Erivan	11,580	1,282
Azerbaijan	Baku	33,200	3,210
Kazakhstan	Alma-Ata	1,059,700	6,146
Kirghizia	Frunze	75,950	1,459
Karelo-Finnish	Petrozavodsk	64,220	869
Moldavia	Kishinev	13,680	2,200
Lithuania	Vilnius (Vilna)	22,800	3,000
Latvia	Riga	24,700	1,950
Estonia	Tallinn	18,050	1,120

Each of these sixteen republics is master of its own affairs. Each has its own written constitution and a complete set-up of state organs, legislative and judicial. Each has its own cabinet of commissars, its own budget, its own court, the power of pardon and amnesty in local cases. And though doubtless a republic would have a hard time in seceding, Article 17 of the Constitution flatly guarantees to each the right of free withdrawal from the Union.

Thus, within the limits of the Constitution, there is self-government for the sixteen nationalities after which these Republics are named. But what is the status of all the others? They, too, are organized into so-called autonomous Republics, Regions, and National Districts on a similar but more limited home-rule which is increased as they show increasing ability to use it.

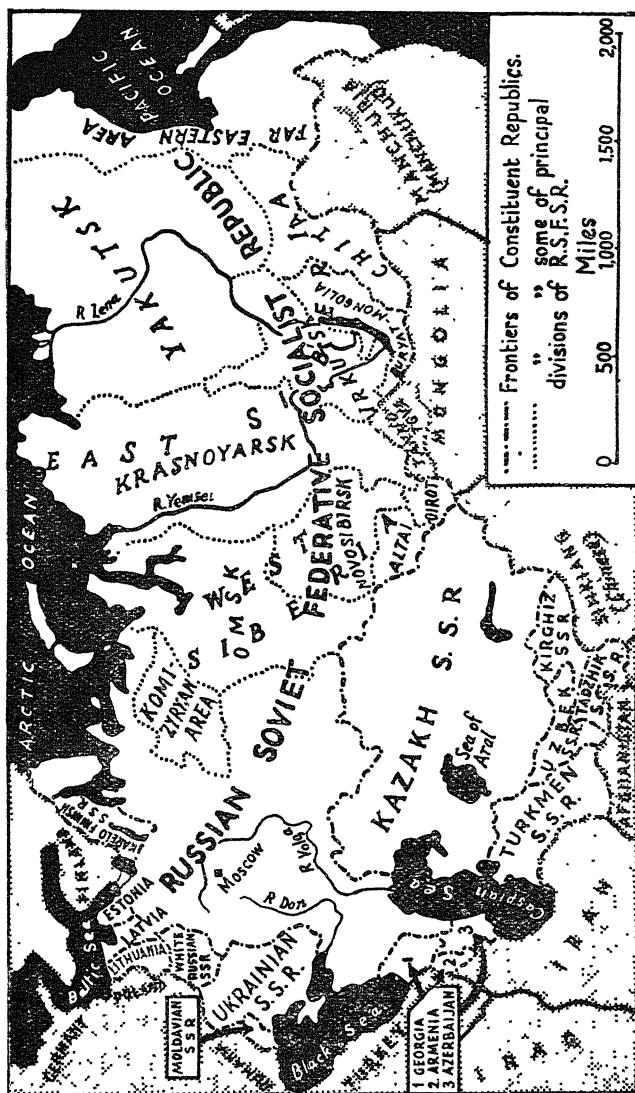
The aim of the Soviets is the fullest development of each people in the shortest time. To this end the resources and

industries of all regions, no matter how far from the centre, are aided and expanded by every means. Under the Tsars they were generally treated as agrarian colonies and sources of raw materials. Their industrialization was artificially retarded in order to provide the Russians with freer markets for their own wares. By heavy taxation their wealth was systematically drained away to the centre.

Under the Soviets the current was reversed. Out of Moscow capital was poured into the far reaches of the Union. Once desolate regions were dotted by grain elevators, the derricks of oil wells, the smoke-stacks of furnaces and smelters. East from the Urals powerful industrial-military bases were established and new cities rose in the Siberian forests. Instead of carrying the cotton fibres of Central Asia to the textile mills of the North, it was cleaned in local gins and woven into cloth in local mills. In its own "Daghestan Fires" the quartz-sands of the district were melted into liquid glass, window-panes, and bottles—10,000 tons a year. In its own shops the tobaccos of Sukhumi were blended and rolled into cigarettes.

Through Arctic seas great ice-breakers smashed their way for steamers carrying supplies to the people of the frozen North and bringing out their furs and game. "In five years," says Vilhjalmur Stefanson, "Igarka, within the Polar Circle, developed from a village of 200 into a city of 14,000, with schools, electricity, and a daily newspaper, one page of it during summer printed in English for the sailors of the freighting ships." All this has been accelerated by Nazi occupation of Soviet territory in the West, forcing the government to the utmost expansion of agriculture in the East, and the re-establishment there of evacuated industries, schools, and workers.

This, in turn, gives a new impetus to those measures aiming at the development of the cultural life of these nationalities. One of them is the assurance to each of these peoples, however small, of its own language. Under the Tsars the slogan was: "One nation, one language!" Not only was Russian



(From An Atlas of the U.S.S.R., by Jasper H. Stenbridge, New York, Oxford University Press.)

THE REPUBLICS OF THE U.S.S.R.

the sole medium of officials in state and courts, but every effort was made to introduce it into the few native theatres, public halls, and schools that existed. A Kalmuck boy caught speaking his own dialect in class or school had to wear round his neck the sign, "It is forbidden to speak Kalmuck," and go without dinner. Among the Kazakhs, Kirghiz and Yakuts, not one in a hundred could read or write. Of the women of Turkmenia, not one in a thousand was literate.

Even cultivated tongues like the Georgian were frowned upon and a minister of Nicholas I solemnly declared: "There never was, there is not now, and there never can be, a separate Ukrainian language. It is Russian corrupted by Polish." At one time the gospels in Ukrainian had to be smuggled across the frontier; and in concerts even the folk songs were sung in French.

Now with universal compulsory education each child in school, each litigant in court, has the right to his own language. From one newspaper in Ukrainian before the Revolution, the number rose to 922, and some 2,000 new books are published each year. The list of new titles in Armenia runs to over 600 a year. More books are printed in Yiddish for the four million Soviet Jews than for all the other thirteen million Jews in the world combined. In Moscow alone, publication goes on in 120 languages.

Among the host of new peoples now making a debut in the field of letters are the *Golds* and *Gilyaks*, the *Yakugirs*, *Yagnobians*, and *Yazgulyanians*, the *Kets*, the *Kumands* and the *Karagas*. These are queer, fantastic-sounding names, as if invented by romantic writers for dwellers on another planet. But they are real peoples, occupying in some cases areas bigger than Illinois or Ontario, and with oral traditions reaching into the misty past. One reason one never heard of them is that hitherto they had no written medium through which to make themselves known to the world. Their languages were only spoken, and without alphabet or script, existed only in the realm of sound. Now forty of them

have been reduced to writing and supplied with grammars, primers, and dictionaries. In like manner the music and folk songs which had no written notation, or which, like that of the Uzbeks, perished centuries ago, are being given one. Thus, to the most obscure peoples is assured a vehicle through which to tell the story of its past, to voice its hopes and dreams and show whatever genius it may possess.

"To each people its own language!" The extremes to which the Soviets have gone in this direction are revealed to the casual traveller from the windows of the railway car. As the train passes through regions of mixed populations, he can glimpse the names of stations in half a dozen languages. All this involves a colossal expenditure. Besides the outlay of money for the printing of textbooks, manuals, and newspapers in scores of vernaculars, there is the output of time and energy on the part of Russian officials in learning the language of the peoples among whom they may be working. Likewise, upon the part of these peoples in the learning of Russian. For obviously if each person could speak only his native tongue, the Soviet Union would be a veritable Tower of Babel. To prevent that, Russian is taught as the second language in the schools so that all citizens may have a common medium of communication.

The Soviets justify these great costs by the ends they seek to attain. In the words of Stalin, "Socialist culture cannot be nationless culture." Only through its own language can the ethos and genius of a people unfold and express themselves in the realms of art and literature.

As a result of all this, there is a veritable renaissance of national cultures. To the great Olympiads of Art troupes with gay, variegated costumes and weird musical instruments come from the far corners of the land: Uzbek shepherds re-enacting the drama of their struggles to reclaim their stolen pasture lands; Georgian mountaineers in felted *bou-rkas* and silvered daggers, reciting their epic, "Man in the

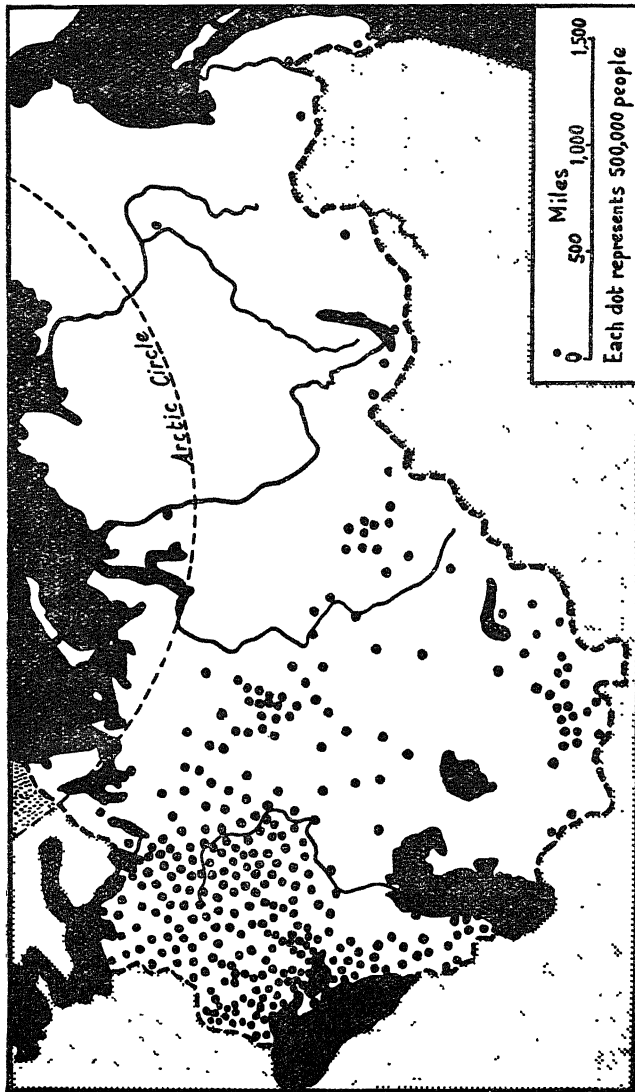
Panther's Skin"; the mass choirs of the Abkhasians singing without words.

Alongside the old culture, so carefully cherished, are the first fruits of the new culture growing out of the nascent life and ferment of ideas now stirring the peoples. The half-heathen Mari chanting the wonders of the "Lenin light," as they call the electricity now illuminating their dark forests beyond the Volga. Tatar poets reading verses dedicated to the tractor—the "iron horse of Socialism." Gypsies describing their new venture as tillers of the soil in "Sunrise Over the Marshes." Squat-legged story-tellers from the bazaars of the East alternate their heroic tales of Tamerlane with new legends about the mighty deeds of Stalin.

Besides the Olympiads of Art there are the Spartakiads of Sport in which the various peoples demonstrate their skill and prowess in the sphere of physical culture. The program includes those peculiar national games and contests in which each people excels: the revival of ancient sports by which their ancestors entertained themselves in olden times; and the introduction of the regular field and track events of to-day. In them a Kalmuck may win the pole vault; a Tungus, the discus-throw; a Ukrainian make a Russian take the count into the wrestling match; loud cheers greet a dark-skinned Buriat runner who outstrips the field.

What would the Nazis think of that? At the 1936 Olympic games in Berlin they were infuriated when an American Negro runner—ignorant of this doctrine of Nordic superiority—beat out the Germans and all the rest. The Nazis salved their wounded pride by declaring the Negro was "just a fleet-footed animal." And they didn't propose to compete with animals. No wonder they anathematize the Soviet Union where in every sphere the swarthy are on the same footing as the fair-skinned, with the prizes and plaudits going to the best.

This encouragement to self-expression in all fields along national lines leads Stalin to remark, "It may seem strange



(From An Atlas of the U.S.S.R., by Jasper H. Stenbridge, New York, Oxford University Press.)

POPULATION DENSITY OF THE U.S.S.R. BEFORE THE WAR MIGRATIONS

that we—advocates of the merging of all cultures into one common culture with one common language—are at the same time partisans of the flourishing of national cultures. But there is nothing strange in this. National cultures must be allowed to unfold and develop, to make apparent all their potential qualities." To the extent that each reaches its full fruition will the society of the future be enriched. And in the present, the opportunity of each people to see and understand the culture and achievements of the others serves as a powerful factor in promoting a spirit of mutual respect and esteem.

Of course, all the devils of nationalism, of racial pride and chauvinism, have not been extirpated. Prejudices between races trained for centuries to look upon each other with rancour and envy are not melted down in a day or decade. Some Armenians still carry bitter memories of bloody massacres at the hands of Kurds and Turks—and vice versa. Some Moslems and Jews whose culture is bound up with a theocratic or feudal past find it difficult to adjust themselves to the new. While anti-Semitism and any expression of racial or religious contempt are crimes, occasionally before the war one heard the old epithets. One suppressed and humiliated peoples were sometimes infected by the same spirit they resented in the Russians and were not averse to lording it over minorities within their own borders. But these attitudes were fast disappearing even before the war.

Clearly the Soviet Union has scored a conspicuous success in solving the vexing problem of races and nationalities. It demonstrates that the national aspirations and interests of the most diverse peoples can be satisfied and at the same time these peoples can be held together in a single political-economic system, with each enjoying the benefits accruing therefrom.

What a tragedy if it hadn't been done! Then this sixth of the earth, like the Balkans, would be broken up into rival,

hostile states, and like the Balkans, subject to piecemeal conquest, plunder, and slaughter by the Nazis.

Instead, it presents the spectacle of 189 peoples of different tradition, colour, and creed working together in peace and amity, and now fighting together against the common foe. In the hour of trial the Soviet Union was not harassed by demands on the part of the subject peoples for greater freedom and independence. Not only at home is it reaping the results of its far-sighted national policy, but abroad, especially among the black, brown and yellow races of the world. In China, in India, in Africa, and even in America there is resentment against the white man's privileged status and supremacy. On the other hand, and a feeling of sympathy and solidarity goes out to the Soviet Union which has put into effect that doctrine of equality implied in the Biblical concept, "God made of one blood all the people who dwell upon the face of the earth."

In diametrical opposition stands the Nazis' doctrine of race and blood. To them the one superior creation is the Aryan-Nordic—reaching its supreme and superb expression in the German—paragon of them all. That this is arrant nonsense, without any foundation in history, biology, or ethics does not keep them from brazenly asserting: "To be born a German is the greatest gift that Almighty God can bestow on any man." Over and over they repeat that Germans are the chosen people, a race of supermen, rightfully entitled to super-privileges, destined to dominion over all. As for those people who are so stupid or perverse as not to appreciate and co-operate with this high destiny—they must be bludgeoned into submission, thrown into jails and concentration camps, exiled, tortured and killed in cold blood.

Such is the fate, not only of the defenceless Jews in Germany, but of the peoples of every country trampled down under the iron heels of the Nazis—of the Norwegians, the Dutch, Danes, and French, with special brutalities reserved for the Slavs. Among the Serbs, for every Nazi slain they

have killed not fifty or a hundred hostages, but up to a thousand. Among the Poles they drag thousands of girls from their homes to sterilize them and throw them in brothels for the Nazi soldiers. Against the Czechs they have proceeded by systematic massacre of their leaders. But the atrocities perpetrated against the western Slavs are all viciously exceeded by those reserved for the Russians. For toward them, of all the Slavs, they cherish a peculiar hatred and vengeance, based on greed, envy, and fear. As Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf*, "We must follow the path trod by the Teutonic Knights to win sod for the German plow and daily bread for the German people." At Nuremberg he was more specific, while Rosenberg shouted, "Drive the Russians into the East. There is no place for them in Europe."

Such was the grand plan of Nazi strategy. To seize the country in a blitz campaign, split it up into puppet states headed by Quislings; exterminate the leaders who might organize resistance; rouse up the old racial animosities, inciting the peoples one against another and all against the Jews; dragoon the masses into the mills, mines, and munition factories; and having converted the immense territory and resources of the Soviets into a colossal arsenal for the German armies, set out for the conquest of the world.

In his address to the Nazi Congress in Nuremberg, Hitler had shouted: "If I had the Urals, Siberia, the Ukraine we would swim in plenty." To that end he played upon the sympathies of the separatists as he entered the Ukraine, urging them to rise and throw off the "Soviet yoke." Instead rising almost to a man against the invader, the Ukrainians gave heed to the orders of their commander-in-chief, Budenny: "Not one ounce of bread for the enemy. Harvest exactly as much as you need. ... Destroy the remainder. Set fire to the crops. Overturn trains, undermine communications, blow up dams."

So the scorched earth policy was carried out. Instead of swimming in plenty, Hitler's army found itself swimming in

the fields flooded by broken dams, swimming in the peat bogs of Belorussia, swimming in the blood of battle and the wreckage of ruined farms and factories where the work of twenty-five years' creation has been destroyed rather than have it fall into the hands of the Nazis.

For the Soviet people well knew what was in store for them—subjugation and serfdom for the Slavs; for the others a slavery and degradation infinitely worse than any suffered in the past.

That's why the first bomb that fell on Soviet soil rallied them all from the frozen tundras of the Arctic to the burning sands of Turkestan. Shoulder to shoulder with the blond, fair-haired Russians of Moscow and the Volga marched the swarthy legions from Kazan, Bokhara, and Samarkand; Kirghiz and Kalmuck horsemen from the plains; Tajiks, Turcomans, and Tatars; Cossacks with swords and tommyguns from the Don, the Kuban, and the Amur; phalanxes from the Siberian forests, the Altai, Armenia, and the steppes beyond the Volga.

And as in the ranks of fighting men, so with their captains and commanders, Stalin, the Georgian, and Voroshilov, the Russian; Shumskevich, head of the air force, a Lithuanian Jew; Budenny of the Cossacks, and Timoshenko from the Ukraine; thousands of generals and officers from the coasts in far-away Kamchatka to the mountains of the Caucasus. Ten million men of all races, tongues, colours, and creeds fighting *against* the concept of a world dominated by any one people, and *for* a world where all nations with equal rights can have their places in the sun.

A large number of Books and Pamphlets dealing with the Fighting Forces of the Soviet Union—their Prowess and heroism—have been published by the Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, and are obtainable from either of these publishers. The Peoples Publishing House, Bombay 4. The Socialist Literature Publishing Co., Agra; The National Book Agency, College St., Calcutta.

4. RED SOLDIERS FROM MIDDLETOWN- ON-THE-VOLGA

Out of the 300,000 villages of Russia the Tsar drew most of his 12 million soldiers in the first world war. If sheer numbers counted, they would have overwhelmed the Germans—in the words of the peasants, “swamped them just by throwing our caps at them.” But they did not. The celebrated Russian steam roller went into reverse, and rolling backward, finally broke into pieces. In Lenin’s trenchant words, “the masses of village soldiers voted against the war with their legs—by running away.”

They had lost faith in their little White Father, the Tsar, and his generals. They were lacking in transport, in munitions and in those complex, deadly weapons of modern warfare. Such as they had, they could not handle well. Familiar only with clumsy, primitive implements, these conscripts from the Russian fields and forests were no match in a mechanized war for German soldiers trained in machine-shops, mills, and factories.

Since that first world war stupendous events have taken place. The Revolution, the Five-Year Plan, Grids of giant power-stations, mills and blast-furnaces, foundries and arsenals. Big new cities in the wilderness, old ones doubling and trebling their population. Nevertheless, most of the Soviet peoples still get their living from the land. The armed forces still draw the bulk of their recruits from the same 300,000 villages as in the days of the Tsar. Only these villages are no longer the same. They likewise have been industrialized, motorized, and collectivized. Their 25 million small holdings are merged into 250,000 big-scale farms. A half million trac-

Two Important Books on the Red Army have appeared . 1, The Army of the Soviet Union (The Peoples Publishing House Bombay 4) ; 2. A Short History of the Red Army (The Socialist Literature Publishing Co. Agra)

tors have been loosed on the fields. Millions of the sons and daughters of peasants are transformed into mechanics. The census of 1939 listed 908,000 tractor drivers, 131,000 combine operators, a million heads of farm brigades.

These facts and figures are widely known, but not much of their human applications. What is the attitude of the 100 million in the Soviet villages? What changes have been wrought in the tiller of the soil? How have they affected him as a citizen and soldier? His ability to handle modern weapons? His stamina and morale? The answer to these questions I sought in a recent visit, shortly before the war to Kvalinsk, a town on the Volga, 150 miles below Kuibyshev.

I first came upon it fifteen years ago, after long travelling over the Russian land. An administrative and recruiting centre for some eighty villages in the hinterland, it depended largely upon their fields of wheat, rye, and sunflowers. A good harvest and the tides of life ran strong in the town; a series of poor ones and they ebbed slowly away.

I came to know the leading characters of the region, from the old Tatar trader in camels and brick-tea to Vlas, the kulak who could put down six pounds of meat and a jorum of rum at a sitting. Alongside of them, the leaders of the new generation: Petrov, the ascetic secretary of the Soviet; Nikolai, the bullet-scarred hero of guerrilla warfare against the White armies; Khonin, the exceedingly wise and humorous People's Judge; the young commanders of the new Red Army in the making.

In its institutions, ideas and customs—as well as in its racial make-up—it was truly representative of the whole country. I felt in revisiting this Soviet Middletown, that here, as in a microcosm, would be reflected the great changes of the last fifteen years.

It was not a cheerful homecoming. Wandering about the old familiar places in the dusk, the holes in the sidewalk seemed bigger, the fences and kiosks had a more tipsy tilt. The red paint had peeled from the wooden obelisk to the

Heroes of the Revolution. Along the dusty streets a few figures slowly shuffled in silence. Only the insect in the shabby hostel where I took refuge showed signs of energy and enterprise.

In the morning I woke to the rumble of grain trucks over the cobbles. Loud-speakers on corners were blaring out news, music, and crop reports. Women were filing into a new plant for canning fruits and vegetables. Streams of wheat and rye were pouring into the Volga barges. Clerks with bulging portfolios under arms hurried to offices. And at last, old familiar faces followed by old Russian greetings, "*Skolko zim! Skolko let!*" "How many winters! How many summers since we last met!"

Presently around the samovar in the Judge's home, while his wife was pouring out carrot tea, I caught up on the news. Old Vlas and the Tatar camel-trader had died. Three of the young Comsomols had climbed to high posts in the Red Army. During the purges six of the old Bolsheviks had been put out of the Party, among them the Judge himself. All but one, however, were now being reinstated. Kvalinsk was on the way to a "cultured" life, boasting a newspaper, telephones, three new rest-homes, motorized trucks instead of horses for the fire-engines, plans for a big cement mill. There would be lots more to show if a third of the Soviet budget wasn't going into defence. Things were getting tense and tighter. On the wharf they had just caught two German agents posing as stevedores. What was the outlook for war? Would the Nazis begin it? Would America line up against them? Anyhow, the Soviets were getting ready and Kvalinsk was doing its part. It was now a region of complete collectivization. It had been a long struggle against kulaks and crop failures. But this year—thank God—there was a bumper harvest! The villages were one big grain factory.

Eager to be off to these villages, I hurried over to the Soviet for conveyance. It was housed in the same old building but its occupants were altogether different. A photograph

of this Soviet taken fifteen years ago by William Wasserman of Philadelphia and reproduced in *The New York Times* showed nearly all its members over 35 years of age. Now it was just the reverse. Offices and power had passed into the hands of the youth—business-like and alert. But for all that I couldn't get any action out of them. They told me the transport head was away. Would I come back in the afternoon. I came.

"Sorry, but he hasn't returned. Please come back in the morning."

I did so, and throughout the next day. Each time apologizing, they pointed out that this was the busiest season of the year. The harvest was in full tide, and on top of that they were getting ready for the fall elections, the opening of schools, the mustering in of the new recruits for the Red Army. No doubt they were really busy—their tasks greatly augmented by red tape, by too much concentration of work and authority in this centre. Officials were continually coming and going; clerks toiled over mountains of documents; lights burned in the windows long after midnight.

It was not, however, on account of these activities I was given the run-around. It was rather the big placard on the walls: "Citizens be Vigilant! Guard against Foreign Agents, Spies and Wreckers!" I had excellent credentials, properly signed and stamped. But so did the two Nazi spies they had caught on the river. So did every foreign agent worming his way into Soviet factories and fields. There was just a chance that I might be one of them, and they weren't going to risk it. Clearly no one less than the President of the Soviet would shoulder the onus of sending me into the villages. But that dour person. Utkin by name, was even more adroit in the arts of evasion and vanishing. At last I cornered him and made a direct assault.

"You are all very busy. So was Lenin. Yet in the midst of the Revolution he took time to find transport for me to Vladivostok. All I want from you is transport to the villages."

A half-hour later I was headed for the villages. Along old familiar roads in clouds of dust we jolted to the top of the Volga hills and an almost breath-taking surprise. The whole aspect of the landscape was changed. The thousands of tiny plots and patches once checkering it like a crazy-quilt were now merged together into big compact fields. Upon them rich stands of ripening grain in billowing tides reached to the far horizon. Unfamiliar as the sight of these wide fields were the sounds that rose from them—the staccato chugging of tractors. We passed tractors with combines cutting grain in twelve-foot swathes; hauling chains of trucks loaded with grain; dragging gang-plows turning up the loam six furrows wide.

Presently we were in Yelshanko, the centre of three collective farms, called *kolhozes*. The zealous secretary proudly pointed out the "Lenin Library." "The House of Defence," the "Laboratory Hut." They were old houses, now slightly remodelled equipped with books, charts, instruments and rechristened with these new names. Alongside was a substantial new building for the kolhoz and its offices; on the outskirts some new-built communal barns, silos, and sheepfolds. Far and away the most impressive was the new Machine-Tractor Station—one of the 7,000 set up on these far-away steppes and villages.

Instead of a mere park for machines as I had imagined, it was a huge shop filed with electric-driven lathes, forges, cranes, and triphammers. Here, begrimed with grease and sweat, some forty youths were working over dynamos, bolting engines into tractors, riveting plates onto caterpillar treads, welding discs onto gang-plows. A clanging, smoking "arsenal of the fields"—the focal point of power and action for the seven kolhozes it was serving. Now, quite likely, it is playing a direct part in the war, serving as a repair shop for disabled Soviet tanks and armoured cars. And if the Nazis have passed that way, it is probably turned into a blackened mass of ruins.

At noon with one of the camp-kitchens I went out to the harvesters in the fields. Slowly a brigade of three tractors and combines, a young Amazon in the lead, came to a stop. The crew—twenty-five of them women—climbed down from their machines and huddled together in the shade. None were over thirty years of age, except a benign, bearded old man, bearing the proud title, "Inspector of Grain." As they fell upon the cabbage soup, black bread, and cucumbers, I fell upon them with questions. They were members of a big kolhoz called "Dawn of Socialism." For three years there had been a series of crop famines from hail, frost or drought and the dread "Dryer Wind" blowing up from the scorching plains of Asia.

But last year eight "activists," returning from the Red Army, were elected managers and leaders of brigades. They obtained fertilizers, clean seeds, and at last a full complement of machines. Thanks to them, the kolhoz for the first time plowed deep, planted early, put in good seeds. The rains had been scanty, but in spite of that, just look at the fields! Every stalk full-eared and so thick a mouse could not squeeze through! Twenty-four bushels to the acre and 3,000 acres of it! Nobody ever saw the like before.

"Isn't that so, *Dedushka*?" they asked the old man.

"The truth," he admitted. "Still, if God didn't send the sun and rain, we wouldn't have any crop."

"Some day we'll be able to get along without any rain at all."

"Maybe so," rejoined the old man. "But you won't get along without God."

At this juncture the brigadier leader, eyeing me askance as I jotted down notes, broke in: "Who are you? Why all these questions?"

I handed over my Moscow credentials which he read slowly aloud.

"Very good," he remarked. "But Moscow officials haven't a million eyes. They can't watch out for everybody."

Fortunately, two of the crew recalled my former sojourn in this village. With their espousal and the aid of a few cigarettes the colloquy went on while they rested.

In this region the norm of each combine was fifty acres a day. They had enlisted as a shock-brigade pledged to reap seventy. Three days ago a shock-brigade on a nearby kolhoz, "May Morning," challenged them in "socialist competition." Which brigade could harvest the most in a week? They had accepted and the race was on. Everything had gone at top speed until yesterday when their best driver had been called away to the "grasshopper front," and the carry-off trucks had been slow in taking away the grain. These delays put them some forty acres behind their rivals. But wait until tomorrow, and they would be that much ahead. Could I keep a secret? They had gotten hold of two searchlights. With them on the tractor heads they were going to reap late into the night.

"Let's go," said the brigadier. The driver climbed into their seats and opened their throttles. Steadily, with rotating reels and clicking blades, the combines moved across the fields, simultaneously reaping, threshing, winnowing the grain and pouring it into hoppers.

The last time—fifteen years ago—I watched the reaping of these fields, the whole village was mobilized, every man, woman, and child. All day bent double, they cut the grain with sickles, gathered it with wooden rakes and pitchforks, beat it with flails on earthen threshing-floors, flung it with shovels above their heads to be winnowed by the wind. Now in the combines, all these implements and processes were merged into one, as in the kolhozes all the plots of land had been merged into one. In a day they were doing more than the peasants with back-breaking labour did in a month.

What else the machines and the kolhoz have done is told in a later chapter, "Revolution on the Land." One part of that revolution is the transformation wrought in the character and outlook of the new generation. Here, as in the

other 250,000 collective farms, the youth was not only machine-minded, but much more versatile and daring than their fathers.

Their militant spirit was reflected in their language. To them, this "battle for the harvest" was one phase in a long struggle for the new way of life. They spoke of "advances in this sector," "retreats on that sector," of "exterminating spies like rats and gophers"; of comrades who had gone away "to fight on the irrigation front," the "coal front," the "school front."

Easily these military terms fell from their lips. In this kolhoz were a score of veteran guerrilla fighters from the last war. Most of the men over twenty-five had served their term in the Red Army. Half of the harvesting crews were reservists. The new recruits were to be called to the colours in the coming week. Already they had three weeks of preliminary training.

Here in this kolhoz was the nucleus of one of those guerrilla bands that play havoc behind the German lines—cutting telephone lines, firing grain-fields, blowing up munition-dumps. How were they organized so quickly to act so effectively? The answer is that they were there almost ready-made in the collective farms. These men were accustomed to working together co-operatively under a commander. All they had to do as the Nazis approached was to slip away to the forest, and another guerrilla band acquainted with the ways and weapons of modern war would be in operation.

How well acquainted, I found out one day in the little "House of Defence," an institution found in almost every village. It contained charts and diagrams of the Red Army; portraits of Stalin, Budenny, Voroshilov. A big wall-map of the Soviet Union, showing the frontiers of its enemies—on the west edged with Nazi swastikas, and on the east with flags of the Rising Sun. Models of tanks and airplanes. Some rifles and machine guns.

In summer it was usually deserted. But when a thunderstorm drove the harvesters from the field, the little house was packed with a crowd of arguing, gesticulating youth. On my last visit I had listened to the old peasants wrangling for hours over moot questions: "Horse *versus* Camel" conducted by their respective champions with inimitable pantomime and "three-storied" oaths; or "Infantry *versus* Cavalry."

To this new generation in Central Russia, horses and foot soldiers seemed non-existent. The subject of their debate was tractors—"Light *versus* Heavy," "Wheel *versus* Caterpillar." At loggerheads, they appealed to me—the Russians cherishing the illusion that every American is an understudy of Ford or Edison. From tractors on the grain-fields, the discussion turned to their role in the battle-field—"with armour and guns, a tractor becomes a tank." From the ground, the debate passed to the air, and I left them locked in a dialectical struggle over combat planes.

A week later, back in Kvalinsk I saw the new recruits from the farms and villages entering the town. They came on foot with bags of black bread on their backs, on trucks and wagons, in companies of from ten to fifty, singing as they marched. There were 750 of them, converging upon a building hung with a red banner, proclaiming "Greetings to the Defenders of the Socialist Fatherland." On one side was a dining-shed with iron kettles embedded in brick. On the other, the "club," newly whitewashed and festooned with red. Along its walls—and on hoardings in the town—was this placard:

New Recruits; Into the Tsar's army your fathers went protesting against the old discipline of blows and beatings. In drunkenness and bravado they sought to drown their grief. Now you consciously go into the Red Army, a school of warriors for the toilers. Down with cursing and ribald songs! Forward to the new life opening before you—a life of cleanliness, comradeship and culture of mind and body! Be worthy of your high calling.

The "club" contained a booth with cigarettes and *kvas*, a corner for chess and checkers, and under a banner with the legend: "The Red Armyist is a Warrior with Book and Rifle," tables with newspapers, books, pamphlets. While largely on political, military, technical subjects, among them were such titles as Sholokhov's *Quiet Flows the Don*, Gorky's *Mother*, Upton Sinclair's *No Pasaran*.

In a central chamber sat the recruiting commission, an officer at the door calling the recruits by name and serial number. As they passed in, I tried to follow them—as I had fifteen years ago—but met with a decided refusal. The orders were strict against admitting any outside on any pretext. How then admit a foreigner? At this moment the commander in charge emerged and recognised me. A short parley over the telephone with Utkin and I was sitting with the commission. It consisted of four officers and five doctors, three of them specialists—tuberculosis, venereal, trachoma. Through a side door the recruits entered three at a time, hair close-cropped and bodies stripped of all clothing. To become suddenly the focus of ten pairs of eyes might have been embarrassing were they not accustomed to the collective nudity of the village baths. Straightway the doctor went to work tapping chests, lifting eye-lids, counting heart-beats, japping fingers into groins. A brief case history of each man. Then at the officers' table, a barrage of questions about family, number of dependents, education, branch of service preferred.

All day long they shuttled in and out, a variegated procession of types, races, and physiques. Tatars with high cheekbones, looking like Genghis Khan. Old Believer lads crossing themselves with two fingers as they entered. Swart, shorthaired Ukrainians, one with a tufted scalp-lock in old Cossack style. Fair-skinned Russians with thighs and legs of alabaster white in contrast to their bodies bronzed almost black from going shirtless in the sun. A trio with such superb physiques that even the hard-bitten doctors

could not refrain from exclamations of wonder. In contrast, another group showing too plainly the effects of early malnutrition—bowlegged, gaunt, and wizened.

In point of fact, most of the 750 recruits were rather lean-looking—a condition due not to any scarcity of food but to intense recent labours in the fields. It left them lank but supple, sinewy, hard-muscled. Compared with similar contingents of drafted men in the West, they appeared extraordinarily sturdy and free from ailments.

From the official report I had a chance to check up on my impressions. The doctors gave it to me a few days later when I dined in their quarters. It showed that only 6 per cent of the recruits were rejected on physical grounds, malaria, rickets, and tuberculosis being the chief causes. Of syphilis—hitherto somewhat prevalent in this region—there were only two cases. My suggestion that this was probably due to the decline in the old custom of eating from a common bowl, and kissing the sacred images, was greeted with the usual skepticism of medical men. They ascribed it rather to the intensive campaign against syphilis, the setting up of free prophylaxis points on the wharves and in the “snubnosed” villages along the river. The two cases were taken *into* the army for immediate, intensive treatment.

Most noteworthy to the doctors was the disappearance of trachoma. Among the Mordvins living in dark, chimneyless huts, filled with acrid wood-smoke and ridden with insects, this eye disease had been endemic. Fifteen years ago there were fifty cases; in this draft none at all, thanks to better houses and hygiene.

Another important factor stressed by the doctors in lifting the general level of health was the elimination of the scourges once ravaging the villages. Cholera was practically eradicated by quarantining the boats in which it came stealing up the Volga; typhus, by killing of rodents infested with lice and fleas; smallpox, by compulsory vaccination. From whatever organic weaknesses that follow these diseases, this new generation was free. They were on the

average heavier, taller, bigger-chested than their predecessors. State medicine had played its part in preparing them physically for their tasks as soldiers.

Another constantly operating factor making for strength and stamina was the condition of life in the villages. The kolhozes had given them machines, but as yet, few of the comforts and amenities of life. They were accustomed to privations, to the extremes of heat and cold; to work long and hard on a simple diet: to sleep on the floor or under the open sky; to long journeys by foot; to endure pain and hardship without flinching. Such are the Spartan qualities demanded of soldiers on active service. To these recruits they were not something to be acquired by arduous training and discipline in the army; they had been bred and drilled into them from childhood.

Enlisted in the armed forces, the next question was what branch of service. Each recruit was called upon to state his preference. This, together with his occupation, aptitude, and training, determined the assignment. Rivermen usually went into the navy; artisans into the artillery; horsemen into the cavalry: the peasants *en masse* into the infantry.

"So it was under the Tsar and up to a few years ago," said the commander, explaining the system. "It was the exceptional peasant that ever thought or dreamed of being anything else than a foot soldier. Now it is just the reverse. These boys want to ride on wheels and soar on wings. If they had their way, we would have no infantry at all. Over half of them have plumped for the tank corps and aviation."

They had chosen these branches in spite of the extra years' service. Furthermore, as the report showed, most of them were well qualified to enter them. In this was reflected the colossal change in the villages. For the old peasant it was difficult enough to exchange his wooden plow for a rifle, his scythe or sickle for a sword. Before the formidable, complicated weapons of modern warfare, he would have stood aghast and bewildered. But to these sons of the

peasants there was nothing alien or mysterious in armoured cars, tanks, and planes. They were only bigger replicas of the machines they already knew. With their operation, construction, and repair, they were well acquainted. Over the fields they had driven them singly and in echelons. No great strain then to step from the steering wheels of the tractors to those of the tanks, from the levers and controls of the combines to those of the combat planes. They had only to extend and amplify the knowledge and skill they already possessed. The fields of the collectives were training grounds preparing them technically, as they had physically, for the demands of modern mechanised warfare.

"The Red Armyist not only knows how to fight; he knows also what he is fighting for." That oft-repeated Soviet phrase I first heard from the commander in comparing the present figures on literacy in this region with the past. Under the Tsar some 30 per cent of the recruits from this region could read and write. Ten years ago, 70 per cent. "Now," he asserted, "97 per cent!"

I ventured to remark—not quite accurately—that that level had been reached in America twenty-five years ago.

"But our youth are not only literate," rejoined the commander, "they are politically literate. They know something of the teachings of Marx, Lenin and Stalin. They know what we are trying to do: what we have already done. They know that the Fascists are our deadly enemies and sooner or later we must fight them."

If this was not true, it was not the fault of the Soviets. Ceaselessly these ideas have been taught to the new generation. In the schools, where social studies occupy the place formerly held by religion; in the press, cinema and radio; by slogans in big letters on red banners; by cartoons, posters and placard. Even the most obtuse and backward cannot remain wholly immune to this. And all this is but a prelude to a wider, more intensive training along these lines they now receive in the Red Army.

5. THE PEOPLES' ARMY

One way of appraising the strength of an army is to know the forces against which it is pitted. At first the public had only a vague idea of how formidable in size and power was the Nazi Juggernaut that rolled across the Soviet frontier on June 22, 1941. Now the United States Department of War gives exact figures and compares them with 1914. Then, with only 123 German divisions available for the two fronts, the Kaiser threw against the Russians less than 50 divisions—11 of his own and 38½ of the Austrians.

In this war Hitler, at the start, hurled against the Russians 220 divisions—180 of his own and 40 of the Finns, Hungarians, and Rumanians. Thus, in numbers, the invading German armies were more than four times greater than in the last war, while in shock power and mobility they were from eight to twelve times greater. Moreover, they advanced at the peak of their strength, flushed by their series of victories in the West. And they advanced with all the initial advantage of momentum and surprise.

Their strategy was first to encircle the Russian armies and then annihilate them. But the Russians refused to be annihilated. To the blitz of the Nazis they countered with the strategy of attrition—wearing down of the Nazi battalions. Outnumbered and forced to give ground, the Red Army sought to make the Germans pay dearly for every foot of it. And they did. In Russia, during the first nine months of this war, according to Winston Churchill, the Germans suffered more casualties than they did in the entire four and a quarter years of the last war. This, of course, may be exaggeration. But so decimated were the Nazi ranks that they were compelled to keep bringing in

new divisions—more than a hundred of them—combing their conquered and satellite countries from Norway to Spain.

Conservative estimates of German losses in Russia up to the winter of 1942 run as high as 4 million or more. In turn, the Germans have inflicted frightful casualties on the Russians. But they did not attain their real objective. "Not a single Russian army has been annihilated," says President Roosevelt. "They are fighting as bravely and brilliantly as ever."

What are the sources of this continuing strength and resistance? In the first place, counting actives and first-class reservists, the Soviets had a well-trained fighting force of over 12 million men. While the Soviets did not make Tsar's grievous mistake of relying on numbers, at the same time, on all citizens was laid "the sacred duty of military service." Every able-bodied male on reaching the age of nineteen was called to the colours. Thus each year some two million reported for service. But only since 1939 have they all received full-time intensive training.

This training on its physical side does not differ essentially from that of other armies—only perhaps it is more severe. The benign looking Timoshenko is a hard drill master, holding that his soldiers should taste in manoeuvres the rigours they must undergo in actual war—little food or sleep, long marches under a broiling sun or in raging blizzards, bivouacking at night in the snow. But today the soldiers in all armies are getting a tough physical training. And, as in the Red Army, they are getting likewise a thorough technical training.

In one respect, however, the training in the Red Army differs greatly from others. This is in the great emphasis upon political, civic, and economic matter. To these subjects in the first two years are devoted 330 solid hours of study along with cycles of "campfire conversations" with men and commanders taking part informally:

In discussing such themes as the Soviet Union, the Fatherland of the Workers, the Rampart Against Fascism, the Pioneer of a New Life, they get an understanding of the aims and achievements of the country they are called upon to defend.

While obedience is demanded of the Red Armyist—the prompt and unconditional fulfilment of every order of the commander—it is not blind but an intelligent, reasoned obedience, based on an understanding of all matters from why the Soviet-German Pact was made to why a certain hill must be stormed. Gone along with the old gilt epaulets and the muzzle-loader is the concept of soldiers reflected in the lines. “Theirs not to reason why; theirs but to do and die.” The Soviets firmly believe that to whatever doing or dying the men may be called, they will do the better and die the more bravely if they know the reason why.

So important is this instruction in the eyes of the Soviets that it has been entrusted to a special class of officers, the like of whom exist in no other army except the Chinese. These are the “political commissars,” who first appeared in the French Revolution. Revived by the Soviets in 1918, they were largely responsible for Soviet victories over the armies of intervention. So authoritative was the commissar—up to October 10, 1942—that he countersigned every order issued by the commander of a brigade or regiment. On that date this was changed by a decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, vesting sole authority in the commander, at the same time promoting several hundred commissars who had proved their skill and mettle to be commanders themselves.

The political officer is now ~~simply the aide of the~~ commander, working in complete subordination to him. But though his rank is changed his duties are largely the same as before. According to the American best versed in Soviet military affairs, General Faymonville, the commissar unites in himself the functions of various offices—from a quartermaster looking out for the material welfare of his

men to a chaplain advising them on personal problems. He must also know about military problems, and be firted not only to explain to the men the reasons for an impending action, but to instruct them in the technique of executing it.

In battle a good commissar steadies the new troops undergoing their first baptism of fire; tells them that the wild yells and shrieking sirens of the Nazis are only meant to unnerve them; rebukes cowards and panic-mongers; notes acts of valour meriting awards and decorations; and he may even take the place of the commander if he is disabled or killed. All his activities are directed toward one end; building up of morale in the men—their capacity to go on fighting against terrific odds and not go to pieces; to hold on when there is nothing left but the will to hold on. This he does by explanation, exhortation, and, above all, by example.

To no small extent the commissars have been responsible for that elan and fighting spirit of the Red Army acclaimed even by its enemies. Says the Nazi military expert, Colonel Soldan, "The tough and staying qualities of the soldiers are beyond belief. They fight for every inch of ground even when their position is completely hopeless." This resolution to fight on to the bitter end is embodied in the oath taken by the Soviet Bomber Command. As the regimental banner bearing Lenin's words, "Death to the German Army of Occupation," is presented the commander and men remove their flying helmets. Then kneeling they declare in unison: "Hearken to us, our country, as this day we swear our loyalty to you. As our eyes see our land groaning under the Fascist heel we swear that as long as hearts beat within our breasts, as long as our hands can grip the throttles of our planes, we shall fight the Fascists, knowing no fear, showing no pity, scorning death in the name of complete and final victory."

The morale of the men in an army may be high, and as in Russia there may be more than ten million of them. But to what avail without the proper equipment? "God is on

the side of the heavy battalions," and in these days must be exceedingly heavy. Clearly perceiving this, fifteen years ago the Soviets started their heavy industries—making the steel, iron, copper, essential for the making of guns, tanks, and engines. "Our aim," said Voroshilov, "is to spare the blood and strength of the Red Army by the highest degree mechanization and motorization."

To this task were assigned the best engineering brains and inventive genius of the country. The results began to appear at manoeuvres and at the great reviews in May and November. Before the parade of a million civilians came the bronzed, steel-helmeted infantry with rifles at "thrust"; the gas, chemical, and bridge building brigades; the sappers and miners. Then the long gun barrels of the rumbling artillery, called by Stalin the "god of battles," followed by arrays of tanks from high speed whippets and amphibians to "land battleships" seventy tons and over. In the sky appeared squadrons of planes from "hedge-hoppers" to giant transport carrying their paratroops and light tanks. Across the Red Square charged the Cossack cavalry in blue and scarlet, armed with tommy-guns and swinging sabres.

"Spectacular enough," said the critics, "but the equipment, like most Soviet stuff, is probably inferior in quality." They were mistaken, Consumer goods might be poor and shoddy, but no defects were tolerated in military supplies. They are not only good in themselves, but they are adapted to the severe climate—the mud, snow, and ice of Russia's winter.

Among the "winterized" weapons are heated tanks; rifles that do not jam or lock in zero weather; wide caterpillar treads for tanks lifting them above the muck and mire; armored sleds for infantry pushed or pulled by tanks to the firing fronts; aero-sleighs with propeller driving them swiftly over the snow fields.

With these the Red Army has also "winterized" clothes, those frost-defying garments evolved by the Russians

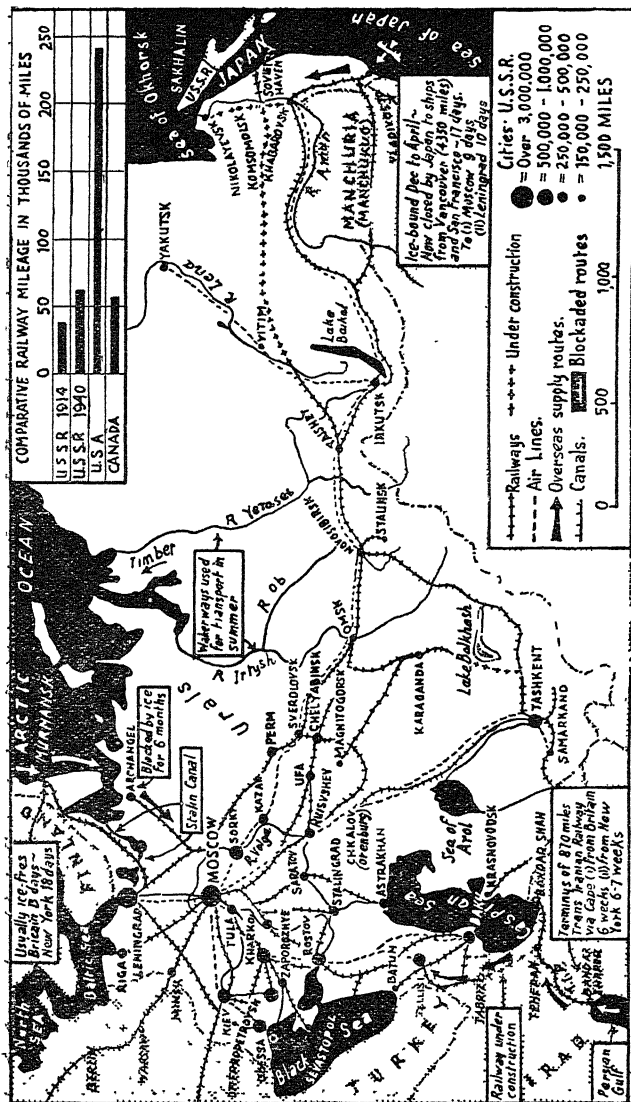
through centuries of battling with the Arctic cold : seamless boots of pounded felt, heavy quilted jackets, fur caps, ankle-long greatcoats. And for the winter sentry, over all goes an enormous, hooded, sheepskin mantle with just a peephole for the eyes. Armored in these and with anti-frostbite salves, the Russians withstand the rigors of a climate which wilts the Germans. As in its dress and weapons, so in its hospitals, the Red Army at the outset of the war was well equipped in everything from oxygen tents to ski-shod ambulance planes.

It has been often said that in order to impress foreigners with their achievements, the Soviets showed them the best they had. On the contrary, in this field at any rate, they took the greatest pains to conceal it. Few outsiders knew how good was Soviet military equipment, or how much there was of it. Estimates of experts on the number of tanks varied from 10,000 to 30,000; on first-line planes, from 5,000, to 15,000; on submarines from 75 to 175.

It appears now that the higher figures were nearer correct and that at the outset of the war the Soviet armies were almost as well equipped as the Nazis. But in the great retreat, the Soviets lost part of their arsenals and on the battlefields they left behind quantities of material. These, along with the output of all the munition plants going full blast in the rest of Europe, gave the Nazis later on an edge on the Russians.

Nevertheless in Leningrad, Moscow, and the new strongholds in the Urals—aided by Britain and America—the Soviets continue to turn out guns, tanks, and planes in such quantities as to amaze the Germans. To keep these weapons along with millions of soldiers and supplies steadily moving into the 2,000 miles long war zone is the job of transport.

Transport has always been a weak spot in Russia. A country of immense distances it has had miserable means of communication. With all its resources it was lacking in stone, so its roads—98 per cent of them dirt—turned into quagmires in the rains of spring and autumn. The great rivers—three



(From An Atlas of the U.S.S.R., by Jasper H. Stenbridge. New York: Oxford University Press.)
 TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM OF THE U.S.S.R.

of the longest in the world are in Siberia—were mostly shallow and turned into ice in the winter. Railways were poor and sparse. With an area three times bigger than the United States, Russia had only a fourth of its railroad trackage. In the last world war, while mountains of grain were spoiling in the villages, the cities went hungry. While depots and junctions were clogged with guns and ammunition, great Russian armies stood defenceless at the front.

At all costs the Soviets determined to avoid a repetition of that disaster. To the Seventh Congress in 1935 Voroshilov cried out, "Give us better transport! It is the blood brother of the Red Army."

In the years following, eight long, hard-surfaced military highways were built, though most of the roads are still atrocious and there is no transcontinental highway. New trucks driven by gas instead of gasoline were developed, the gas being generated out of local materials—wood, peat, straw. The rivers were deepened and linked by canals into the beginnings of an inland water system. Airlines were extended over the wide flat country—admirably fitted for flying—running up through the Arctic with its countless lakes providing landing fields for planes ski-shod in winter and pontoon-equipped in summer. Fleets of big transport planes like the one that brought Molotov to America, carried more freight by air than all the rest of the world's planes combined. The railway system was extended by 15,000 miles, including new lines to Karaganda, the Donbas, and stretches of the Bam, running from Lake Baikal to the Pacific. Old lines were ballasted, double-tracked, and equipped with powerful Diesel locomotives and water systems made for the long dry runs over the arid steppes.

But fast as the railways grew, the traffic on them grew faster. So loaded were they that in 1941 the density of traffic was twice as great as in America. Overstrained in peacetime, it was freely predicted that in event of war they would break down completely. But they did not. They stood

up the job of carrying the Red Armies to the front and at the same time evacuating over 30 million civilians to the East. Wood often takes the place of coal or oil in the fireboxes; women take the place of engineers killed at the throttles; dug-outs replace bomb-demolished stations. But the trains keep going. Under like tension operates every other form of transport, by air, by water, or by animals, from pack horses climbing the high peak in the Caucasus to reindeers on the frozen wastes around Murmansk. All of them intent on their double task of keeping raw materials moving into the munition works and finished products moving towards the front.

Every day transport must deliver to the Red Armies at the front tens and hundreds of thousands of tons of food and weapons, from cartridges to caterpillar tanks. The distances vary greatly. At Stalingrad the tanks rolling off the assembly line moved straight into action against the Nazis on the outskirts of the city. Alongside of them fought the tanks that had come from Detroit and Montreal. Over the ocean by three main routes under convoy these Lend-lease supplies and weapons are moving to three main Russian railheads. They are unloaded from Soviet ships at Vladivostok in the east; from Allied ships at the White Seaports of Archangel and Murmansk in the north; and at Basra on the Persian Gulf in the south—14,850 miles from New York, almost the longest possible point to point voyage in the world.

Through the air by way of Alaska, big freight planes are likewise carrying Lend-lease materials, and it may be that ultimately over these air lanes in the Arctic and elsewhere will go most of the traffic. From these landing points in Russia the supplies are shipped to their various destinations on the distant fronts. Thus on to their thousands of miles of travel by sea or by air often are added a thousand and more miles by land.

In this field of transport the great expanses of Russia are an obstacle and handicap. In other ways they are a decided asset—especially in time of war. The Russians have turned

their immense expanses into an ally and defender of themselves and into a relentless enemy of the invaders from the day of Genghis Khan to the Grand Army of Napoleon and the legions of the Kaiser. "I could get to Moscow, perhaps farther," said General von Hindenburg in the last World War, "but Russia is so vast."

In 1918, when the German armies were every day driving deeper into the Ukraine, I was talking to Lenin. Speaking very slowly in English, he said, "Let them come! They will swallow more and more of our land, but they cannot digest it. They will get so much that their stomachs—no, that isn't the right word—belly—that's it, their bellies will burst."

This was making a virtue of necessity, and that is what the Soviets have done in this war. Surprised and outmatched at the outset, it was impossible for the Red Armies to stop the Nazi advance. They could only delay it. So they gave up territory in a fighting retreat. It was a strategy of "trading space for time"—time for the Soviets to mobilize fully their men and industries. Also in giving up territory they were "trading space for lives"—saving as many of their own lives as possible and taking as many German lives as possible. They placed a price of so many Nazi casualties on each town or position yielded to the Nazis, and usually made them pay it. By all means they sought to husband their own manpower in keeping with the dictum of Napoleon that "God is on the side of the last reserves." That has been a main aim of Soviet strategy.

Over against that stood the blitz strategy of the Nazis aimed at the swift and wholesale destruction of the enemy. To this end they devised the assault-in-depth—a leaping over or crashing through the front and striking the enemy on the flanks and the rear. Spearheads of tanks, backed by motorized infantry, plunge through weak spots in the line; drive in some fifty miles; then fanning out or circling back close in upon the enemy in a pincers movement to surround, demoralize and destroy him.

These tactics, used so successfully in France and Holland,

the Nazis expected to repeat on an immense scale in Russia.

But the Russians had been closely observing them, and in keeping with Stalin's oft-repeated advice, "Learn from everybody—especially your enemies," they had their counter measures. Against this Nazi assault-in-depth they had devised years in advance the strategy of defence-in-depth—a whole series of strong point rather than a fortified line, in a zone reaching a hundred miles into the rear. It was studded with pill-boxes, bunkers with revolving cupolas, and tank-traps. Instead of holding the front at all costs, they kept it fluid and flexible so that it gave under impact. Letting the Nazi spearheads through—sometimes intentionally—they closed in on them, and catching them in a deadly cross-fire, called the "wringer," they were often able to pinch off the pincers. Sometimes they didn't. Sometimes the Nazis were too powerful and whole Soviet regiments were encircled and trapped.

But instead of surrendering as they should according to theory, they kept fighting and often fought their way out to the main Red Army or merged with the guerrillas. Then the Nazis changed to heavier formations. The Soviets in turn countered with new tactics and new weapons, like the long-barrelled anti-tank rifle shooting a bullet at short range with such velocity that it pierces thick armour.

These changes are constantly taking place—at Stalingrad von Bock changed his tactics four times—in this Armageddon in which brains along with bullets are contending for mastery. Resourceful, hampered by no antiquated dogmas, the Soviets are constantly inventing new tactics, ruses, and weapons. All aimed at that goal of strategy, defined by Stalin as "preparing the final knockout blow for the enemy," This in Soviet plans is to be achieved not only by military means but by other devices. Pre-eminent among them is propaganda.

Through propaganda the Soviets seek to break down the morale of the German soldier, to induce him to malingering, to desert, to rebel. I had some experience helping the Russians

get their propaganda pamphlets and papers into the German armies in the winter of 1918, "So infected by this were several of our divisions," declared the German General von Hoffman, "that we did not dare transfer them to the West. It broke down our morale and brought about the defeat and revolution that ruined us."

What the Soviets did to the German invaders twenty-five years ago, they are seeking to repeat today. Along with the tanks and howitzers moving to the front go batteries of linotypes, printing presses, and loudspeakers spraying the enemy ranks with the shrapnel of facts, arguments, and appeals. By way of argument they print in German telling extracts from the speeches of Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin. By way of news they tell the Germans of the cities blasted by American and British bombers, the epidemic of disease and hunger among the German children at home, the ever-growing stream of tanks, planes and troops coming from America and Canada. By way of appeal they ask the German soldiers, "Why are you a thousand miles from home burning and looting the homes of others?" "Why are you workers and peasants killing your fellow workers and peasants in Russia?"

These leaflets and newspapers are dropped from planes, thrown up into the air to be blown by the wind onto the German side, tacked onto trees by guerrillas, floated down stream in bottles and rafts to where Germans are swimming, and even carried by kites and arrows into their camps and trenches.

So widespread is this propaganda that it would be difficult for the Germans to escape it even if they wanted to. But they don't want to. They pick up and read these leaflets even though the Nazi High Command threatens death to anyone doing so. Often they are found in the coat linings of German prisoners and deserters.

One leaflet pictures a German soldier at a crossroad. On the signpost a finger points to his family impatiently await-

ing his return; another finger points to terrible slaughter and cemeteries filled with German dead. The caption says that instead of giving the Germans "living-space" in Russia Hitler is finding for them "dying-space." A cartoon depicts Hitler in his workshop busily whittling crosses for endless rows of German graves.

Would Hans Schultz like one of these crosses planted on his grave? If he doesn't, he had better come over to the Russian side. But his Nazi officers tell him that the Russians will mistreat him, beat him up, maybe shoot him, for they hate all Germans. Don't believe a word of it. Hans Schultz. The Russians hate only the Nazis, not the German people. Take a look at this photograph of Germans who have surrendered. They are safe and clean and warm in Russian camps reading papers and playing games. Then read what they have to say about it themselves over their own signatures and regimental numbers. Or maybe you can hear them tonight over the Russian loudspeakers where they move in close to the German lines. They will tell you how to come over.

But isn't it dangerous to try to come over? Won't your own Nazi officers shoot you on the spot? That's true, Hans Schultz. For that reason be very careful and read these directions, telling you just what to do and what not to do in planning your escape. Later you may get more specific directions as to when and where.

Meantime, here is a "passport" which, when the time comes, you hand over to the first Red sentry you meet. It guarantees safe conduct through the Russian lines and a safe passage home after the war. To the order-loving Germans with their respect for authority, these "passports" impart an official stamp to the transaction. With them they come over to the Russians singly and in groups. With more cold, hunger and despair, they will come in hundreds. When the tide turns toward defeat, in thousands!

Another distinctive feature of this war is the big part played by the guerrillas, or *partisans*, as the Russians call these civilian fighters. They are part of the strategy of defence-in-depth. As the regular Red Army seeks to destroy the Nazis at the front, these irregular guerrilla bands operating on German-held territory help to destroy them in the rear—to continually harass and make life unbearable for them. How they do it is told by Nazi officer in a letter to his family in Hamburg.

"The partisans are the nightmare of our existence. They blow up bridges, wreck trains, burn down our storehouses, slash tires on our trucks. Often they do these things with the very weapons they have stolen from us. Usually they strike at night, and before we can open fire they are off again to the forest. Little sleep we get, or little rest. They make more hell in this land where there is hell enough already. I'll be glad to get away from it."

But he never will. The guerrillas got him, and this letter was taken from the frozen body lying on a road leading into the Tula forest.

Ever since there have been wars, there have been guerrillas. In the American Revolution they fought under such wily leaders as Francis Marion, the "swamp fox." In 1812, they hung on the flanks of Napoleon's freezing, starving army fleeing from Moscow. In 1918-20 there were thousands of partisans like Chapayev of whose daring and cunning one can hear endless tales on long winter nights in the Russian villages.

Heroic as were those exploits, they are dwarfed in number and effectiveness by the Soviet partisans of today. That is because for the first time in history guerrilla warfare was planned for in advance. The guerrillas are usually well supplied with weapons and dynamite hidden on the collective farms long before the Nazis came, or cached in their hideouts in swamps and forests. And they keep in close contact with the regular armed forces, their movements co-

ordinated by scouts or radio. Thus, while the Red Army makes a frontal attack on some Nazi position, in a sudden sally out of the woods a detachment of guerrillas may fall upon them from the rear.

If, as Byron said, "the mountains were made for freedom," so were the forests. As the Nazis advanced, sometimes an entire village with children, chattels, and cattle fled to the forest and found sanctuary in its depths. Behind the German lines are areas with a score of villages where life goes on almost normally, safeguarded by the partisans. They run a radio program, print a news-sheet, conduct their own courts. In full disregard of the cardinal rules for partisans—silence and invisibility—they bake bread, forge weapons, hammer and build, while from a distance the Nazis watch the blue smoke curling up through the trees from a hundred camp-fires.

Into these fastnesses, with rifles lurking behind trees and thickets spitting hand grenades, the Nazis are reluctant to enter. By bombs, by threats and promises, they strive to make their denizens capitulate. But almost always in vain. On the edge of the great Briansk forest the Nazi put up this sign:

"Partisans, your case is hopeless. Come out of the forest and your lives will be safe. If you do not, you will all be shot. *By order of the German High Command.*"

This sign was torn down and replaced by another—crude but laconic: "Entrance to this forest forbidden to dogs and Germans. *By order of the Partisan Kostya Fillipovich.*"

The equipment of these bands varies from a few firearms to small speedy tanks, trench mortars, and even planes. The resourceful partisan can convert into a weapon of war almost anything from a bandanna for silently strangling a sentry to a horseshoe for derailing a train.

In size these bands vary from a half-dozen members up to hundreds, and in a few cases, thousands. Old ones sometimes vanish, new ones are constantly springing into action.

How many there are in all is unknown. "We are like the stars," say the partisans; "no one can count us and no one can reach us." The latter is not always true. However ingenious they may be, they are sometimes trapped. When big German forces, surrounding their forest, close in upon them, escape is most difficult. Captured, the partisan is treated not as a prisoner but as an outlaw, and killed. Many are first tortured to extract the secrets of the band. But the Germans rarely get any information for a guerrilla is as good as his oath.

"I, Ivan Petrovich, a true son of the heroic Russian people, swear never to lay down my arms until the last fascist in our land is destroyed.

"For ravaging our villages, for massacre of our children, I swear vengeance on the enemy—bitter, merciless, and ceaseless—an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth."

"I swear to die in battle rather than to allow my family or the Soviet people to become slaves of the Nazis. If by weakness or cowardice, I break this solemn oath, and betray my people, let me die the death of a traitor at the hands of my comrades."

These guerrilla bands behind the German lines are only one part of the all-embracing "Peoples' Army." On the Soviet-held territory are likewise many auxiliary forces waiting to meet any emergency. There are kolhoz detachments working in the fields with rifles slung on their backs, ready for Nazi paratroops dropping down from the sky. The sharpshooters crouching in trees firing at low-flying Nazi planes. The civilian brigades building barricades, tank-traps, and mile-long walls of straw to be fired at the critical moment in the enemy assault. The Labour and Factory Battalions which marched out of Leningrad, Rostov, and Stalin-grad to do battle with the picked troops of the Nazis.

One might conclude that any Soviet citizen could handle a machine gun, use a bayonet, concoct a "Molotov cocktail"

a home-made bomb out of a bottle filled with gasoline. And he would be right. Most of them can.

Long before this war a million men and women qualified as "Voroshilov sharpshooters," over 10,000 for the highest rating of "sniper." Over five million won the "Ready for Labour and Defence" badge by passing tests in map-reading, scaling barricades marching seven miles or swimming fifty meters with a rifle. . . . Eight million took part in the annual ski-running contests. Even the children were trained as scouts to spy out the enemy, to signal his approach by foot, horse, auto or airplane to deliver messages creeping along the hedges "as quietly as kittens."

Much of this work headed up in the Air and Chemical Defence League which had fifteen million members, with branches in almost every big office, school, farm, and mill. It put on rehearsals against night raids; drilled the people in the use of gas masks; the dousing of incendiary bombs; organized the donors for the "blood banks."

For a decade before this war the League was teaching these things which we started to learn after the war—and much more. It supplied the "Houses of Defence" in the villages with maps, guns, and instructors. It erected 600 high towers from which a million parachutists took their first lesson in jumping. It aided in the annual registry of horses, camels, carrier-pigeons, and military dogs. Near Kvalinsk I once saw a reservist-farmer training his big police dog to grapple a dummy enemy by the throat, and leap at a tractor with sticks of imitation dynamite—just as such dogs in this war leap at tanks with real dynamite. As he patted his dog for his good performance, the reservist remarked: "He, too, is a soldier in our Army."

Out of dues and lotteries these civilian-military groups presented the Red Army with planes, canteen, and libraries. The Red Army in turn lent them its air-fields and rifle-ranges; camped and marched side by side with them in the fall manoeuvres. Colleges theatres, and factories became

patrons of regiments, sending their best artists, scientists, mechanics to the Red Army camps and clubs, receiving visits from them in return. Each year from office and shop two million reservists entered the Army again, and after a few weeks' training, returned to their shops and offices. In the villages the Red Armyist, helping in the harvest on furlough, was the favourite of the women, the idol of the children.

The Army was not something apart from the people. At a hundred points they meshed and merged with each other. The civilian was now a soldier : the soldier was a civilian. The aim expressed by Woodrow Wilson in 1917 when he said, " We have not an army to train for war, but a nation," was realized in Russia. It was a nation of 193 million people in arms. The first line of defence was the regular Red Army. Behind it stood these auxiliary forces. Behind them the whole people with a knowledge of at least the rudiments of war.

After the signing of the Soviet-German Pact in 1939, this almost universal military training was intensified and made compulsory. Drilling was instituted in the lower schools ; intensive pre-draft training in the higher schools. Women were subject to service in the medical, veterinary, and auxiliary corps ; the whole male population from 16 to 50 years to at least part-time military training—a reservoir of 42 million men for the Soviet armed forces to draw upon. And for their arms and training in peacetime, 70 billion rubles a year—or a third of the national budget in preparing for war. And now, all the resources of the country, and all the energies of all the people—every man, woman and child—are unreservedly devoted to carrying it on.

It is an impressive, but at the same time a tragic, spectacle. For the Russians are essentially a peace-loving people. This seems a bit strange to say of them—especially of the Soviet youth when they are fighting like lions. But it is true. In no other country had so many people suffered so much from wars in the recent past. In no other country

was war so abhorred, and less glorified in speeches, cinema and theatre. In no other country was war such a negation of the hopes, the dreams, and desires of its youth. They were intensely absorbed in the creation of their new world, and in that they found their complete fulfilment. They were pre-eminently a generation of builders.

They built the first great tractor plant on the bleak steppes near Stalingrad. They laid down tens of thousands of miles of trunk lines across the steppes; double-tracked the Trans-Siberian railway and double-bridged it so that if the Japanese blew up one bridge; the trains could pass over the other. They hewed with axes from the frozen soil the foundations for a chain of cities, ports, and fueling stations along the Arctic; opened the great Northern Route for vessels pushing through to the Pacific and for airplanes flying over the Pole to America. They built the big power plants on the Dnieper, the Volkhov, and the Zanga rivers—setting the dark villages ablaze with electric light and the wheels turning in a thousand factories. They dredged the deep canals and waterways linking the capital with the Soviet seas and the oceans beyond; built new cities in the wilderness; blasted motor roads through the granite peaks of the Pamirs.

“Constructiveness,” said William James, is as instinctive in man as in the bee or beaver.” With these Soviet youth it amounted to a passion. That’s why, though trained for war, they hated it so profoundly. It would put a stop to their building.

To the Nazi youth war was exalted as the means through which humanity grows great and noble. Vittorio, the son of Mussolini, back from bombing the defenceless peoples of Ethiopia, exclaimed: “War is the most complete and beautiful of sports.” (Anyone who said that in Russia would be put in an insane asylum.) To this Soviet youth building was the most complete and beautiful of sports.

They had built much in the last decade. But it was

little alongside those plans they had for the future. In June, 1941, 2,231 new enterprises were in process of construction. The giant plants of the first Five-Year Plans were to grow into a race of super-giants. In the Urals the biggest steel mill in the world. On the Great Bend of the Volga, the biggest power plant. Beside them, the domes and turrets of hundreds of colleges and institutes, Palaces of Art and Culture. Moscow was to become the most beautiful city in the world.

Then, suddenly, the shattering of their plans and dreams with the thunder of Nazi cannon in the West. The builders were summoned to rally in defence of what they had built. The shock-brigades of the factories became the shock battalions for the battle front. The tractor drivers of the farms grasped the throttles of tanks and fighting planes. They took their places in that long, blood soaked zone reaching from the Caucasus to the tundras of the Arctic.

These are the lads who rush into the gaps to stiffen the wavering lines. The machine-gunners desperately holding the pill-boxes and barricades until crushed beneath Nazi tanks. The commissars injecting new hope and nerve into the tired battalions. The dynamiters mining dams and factories and, just as the prizes are within Nazi grasp, blowing them to bits. The white-clad sky troops like phantoms gliding out of the white birch forests to strike terror in the enemy's rear. The guerrilla bands from ambush hurling bottles of blazing gasoline upon the Panzer columns. The last ditch fighters tying sticks of dynamite to their bodies so when the Nazi tanks pass over them, they will be blown to bits. The "living bombs," loading obsolete planes with explosives and diving on Nazi troop ships to perish together with their planes. These are the ones so often proclaimed by the Nazis as dead and defeated—rising up again and again to administer death and defeat to the invaders.

True, they are different from the soldiers in the other armies of the United Nations—Canadians, Czechs, Chinese,

Dutch, Norwegian. No more daring than those British air-men decorated for their exploits over Murmansk. No more valiant than our own soldiers locked in struggle with the Japanese in the Pacific. To paraphrase Kipling: "There is neither border nor breed nor birth, when brave strong men fight side by side, though they come from the ends of the earth." But where we have lost our tens of thousands, the Russians have lost their millions. Millions of the bravest and best—giving up their lives to preserve the heritage of our civilization, conscripts of the dream of building a better world.

6. COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, STALIN*

When the Nazis came in sight of Moscow, Stalin took over the post of commander-in-chief of the armies. The experts exclaimed : " God help the Russian people now ! " To them it seemed a last desperate act. Stalin might be a first-rate politician, a great administrator and industrialist, but what could Stalin know about military affairs? That question shows how little the experts knew about him.

Since his earliest days Stalin has been in the thick of every struggle. He learned military strategy from practical experience. He was a member of the War Revolutionary Committee that made the Revolution. He took an important part in formulating and devising the tactics used successfully against the armies of the Whites and their allies, who for three years were repeatedly, insistently driving toward Moscow.

As master organizer, it was his job to keep supplies moving to the fronts, mobilize forces in the rear, inject discipline into the demoralized army of the Ural, and aid in the organization of the new Red Army which finally drove out the invaders. He has been doing the same things ever since, giving much of his time and energies to military affairs, applying the same extraordinary firmness and rigid discipline of leadership to his intimate contact with the people.

Almost every mission to Moscow bears witness to Stalin's grasp of military technique. Beaverbrook and Hopkins reported that he had immense knowledge of munitions ; he had mastered the mechanical details of the famous Russian Stormovik plane ; had exact figures on the horsepower of even British airplane motors ; as commander he " knew the de-

* Two Biographies of Stalin are available :

1. Stalin by Kalini (India Publishers, Allahabad.)

2. Stalin—Marx-Lenin Institute (The National Book Agency, College, Sq., Calcutta.)

tails of every sector like the palm of his hand." To Harri-man he said, "This is a tank war and will be decided by the co-ordination of tanks and airplanes." With good reason Churchill refers to him as that great "warrior-in-chief" of the Russian people, and says, "Stalin is a massive and strong personality, suitable to the story of the times he has lived... a man of inexhaustible courage and will power a saving sense of humour of deep cool wisdom and complete absence of illusion of any kind."

Many contradictory statements have been made about Stalin. Some critics called him mediocre, and then proceeded to ascribe to him qualities that only a genius and giant could possess. Certainly anyone who became, as his enemies said, complete master and ruler over one-sixth of the world has more than a second-rate brain. Stalin is pictured as a cruel man without ruth or pity. Upon him is laid the responsibility for all evils and crimes from the privations and suffering of the Soviet people to the exiling of kulaks and execution of the generals. That is logical enough. If Stalin is a despot, the sole arbiter, maker and promulgator of decrees and laws, then he is rightly dammed for all Soviet cruelties, follies, and failures. But naturally it follows that he must be credited with Soviet triumphs-- the successful nationality policy, the Five-Year Plans which built up the country, the unparalleled morale and heroism of the Red Army, the fierce resistance of a united people.

The logic of this is recognized by many of his one-time opponents. Lord Beaverbrook said, "Communism under Stalin has produced the most valiant fighting army in Europe. Communism under Stalin has provided us with examples of patriotism equal to the finest annals of history. Communism under Stalin has produced the best generals of the war."

But all this of course is succumbing to the great man theory of history. It is at variance with the whole method of doing things in Russia which, as every American engineer

who has been there knows, proceeds by endless conference, discussion, and debate.

These policies and so-called programs were not just thought up by Stalin and imposed upon the people. They were first thrashed out in the high organs of the Party and State. They were often the subject of long and bitter debate in tens of thousands of Communism "cells," labour unions, co-operatives, and Soviets of the republics, regions, cities, and villages. And most important, these Soviet policies for the most part fairly reflect the ideas, convictions and feelings of the great majority of the Soviet people.

Take for example, that historic controversy over the question, "Can Socialism be built in one country—in Russia alone?" Trotsky and his partisans said, "No." They insisted that the Soviets foment revolutions in other lands; that Russia could not take the socialist path alone. But Stalin insisted that Socialism in Russia was "possible, necessary, and inevitable." Tirelessly hammering away at this theme, he won the Party to his views.

It was in carrying out the program that the Party had agreed upon that Stalin showed his mettle. "Will passionately," he said, "and you can achieve anything, overcome everything!" Riding over every obstacle and opposition and driving the First Plan through to completion, he launched the country on a Second and a Third Plan—each a more comprehensive and colossal undertaking. There were many who protested against the terrific speed and tempo; who resented the hardships imposed upon them; who questioned the wisdom of the whole undertaking. But they do so no longer. To all it is now apparent how essentially correct and farsighted it was. Thanks to industrialization, the collectivization of the farms, the mechanization of the army, Russia was ready to meet the supreme test of modern war. It had the equipment, the stamina, and the will.

Stalin's real name is Joseph Vissarionovich Djughashvili. Like other revolutionists, he went under various pseudo-

nyms—Koba, David, Chichikov, and the one that so aptly characterizes him, Stalin, meaning "of steel." He was born December 21, 1879, in Gori, a mountain town on the railway leading down to the Black Sea, the son of Vissearion, the shoemaker. His devout mother, Ekaterina, whose other three children had died in infancy, piously dedicated her fourth child to the church. "Soso" she called him, using the Georgian diminutive for Joseph. After years of adversity, during which his father died and his mother earned the family bread with her needle, he entered the Orthodox Seminary in Tiflis.

But instead of a priest, he became a revolutionist. Discussing the process of change, he said, "First, one became convinced that existing conditions were wrong and unjust. Then, one resolved to do one's best to remedy them..... Russian capitalism was the most atrocious and bestial in the world; the government of the Tsar the most corrupt, cruel, and inefficient." The theological school was much like the autocracy it served. In rebellion against its dead formalism, intolerance, and espionage, he turned from the Fathers of the Church to the Fathers of Scientific Socialism. Charged with infecting his fellow students with Marxism, at eighteen years of age he renounced the priesthood to become a book-keeper by day, a conspirator by night.

During the round-up following a formidable street demonstration in the centre of Tiflis, Stalin fled to Batumi. There he organized a branch of the Party and was arrested fomenting a strike in the Rothschild Mills. After twenty months in prison he was sentenced to three years' exile in Siberia. Escaping after a few weeks, he was back on his home-ground, running the illegal paper, *Fight of the Proletariat*. With the same vigor that he fought the Tsar, he fought the Georgian nationalists, Anarchists, and Mensheviks. For he was now an ardent Bolshevik. Always one by temperament, after intensive study in his prison cell he had become one by conviction, lining up with Lenin at the start.

From the mountains he carried the campaign to the Caspian Sea, rallying the Moslem oil workers into study "circles," negotiating a contract with the oil magnates, and turning Baku into a citadel of Bolshevism. Out of it issued the first general strike, an overture to the revolution of 1905, when a fierce partisan warfare raged throughout the Caucasus. The oil fields were fired, the underground press came out in the open, a separate republic was set up in Guria, raids were directed on government institutions, climaxing in the famous Tiflis "expropriation." By bombing in daylight a carriage that under Cossack convoy was carrying funds to the State Bank, 150,000 rubles came into the Party coffers.

In every crisis, most cool and collected in the moments of highest tension there was Stalin. And there he was, not only during the rise of the revolutionary tide, but during the slack days of its recession. For a short time he left Russia to attend the party congress in Finland—where he first met Lenin face to face—as he did later in Stockholm and London. But he did not linger on. With most of the leaders fleeing abroad for their lives he felt that his place was in the Russia. Each time he hurried back to rally and inspire the workers, to help salvage something out of the wreckage. Through the long black years of terror reaction he was always in the thick of the struggle.

For a decade Stalin lived like a hunted animal hounded by spies, enduring the severest privations and punishments. On Easter Sunday, 1909, with his fellow prisoners, he was forced to run the gauntlet. Many collapsed under the ordeal, but Stalin, with head erect and book in hand, defiantly strode between the two rows of soldiers while their rifle butts beat a tattoo on his head and shoulders. That was in the northern province of Vologda, to which he had been exiled for three years. Escaping after a few months, he was back again in Baku. Rearrested as a fugitive from justice, he was shipped back to Vologda. Escaping a second time,

by Party orders, he took up work in St. Petersburg. A third time captured, a third time he was returned to Volodga, from which a third time he slipped away.

The courts and the gendarmes of the Tsar would have dealt more severely with Stalin had they realized his true destiny. He misled them by always changing his name, and, when caught, by passing himself off as a person of no great consequence. Understanding at last how dangerous he was, the next time they caught him, in the winter of 1911, they sent him to Siberia for safe keeping and to cool his revolutionary ardour in those icy wastes. It was a four years' term, of which he served four months. When the snow had melted, he too had vanished. While the police were searching all Russia for their man, he had slipped over the border and was playing chess with Lenin in a cafe in Cracow. "Here, with us, is a wonderful young Georgian," wrote Lenin to Gorky at this time. "He has collected all the Austrian and other material on the question of nationalities and has settled down to prepare a treatise on the subject." His work, completed in Vienna, appeared as a series in a magazine and later as a book.

Presently Stalin was back again in St. Petersburg directing the publication of the *Star* and *Pravda*, putting militancy into the people. But the police knew now the place to look for him, in the centre of the movement. There they trapped him in 1913, thanks to the Bolshevik deputy Malinovsky, who was in reality a provocateur. This time he was exiled to the little village of Kureika on the high bluffs of the Yenisei River, inside the Polar Circle, with repeated warnings to the governor to keep him there and a special bailiff to watch over him.

Under this surveillance, Stalin, unable now to escape, remained a virtual prisoner in the arctic wastes of Siberia. where even today his life in exile is engraved on the folk memory. In *Soviet Asia*, Steiger and Davies write: "We met and talked with the people at Kureika, who told us

about Stalin's medicine-chest, the only one in the hamlet and always on hand to aid the sick day or night. The people also spoke of the kitchen garden Stalin planted in front of his log hut to grow cucumbers, onions and turnips, the first ever seen by the local inhabitants." Thus, deep in the backwoods of the Russian Empire Stalin lived, a gardener, fisherman, and trapper until the downfall of the Tsar in 1917.

Out of exile he plunged suddenly into the vortex of the February Revolution. After long isolation, Stalin was unable at once to orient himself or take up a resolute clear-cut Bolshevik position. "My mistaken viewpoint I shared with the majority of the Party," says Stalin, "but I surrendered it wholly in April, adopting the theses of Lenin." Henceforth, in support of them, he laboured indefatigably in all the key posts he was called to occupy.

By the Soviets he was elected in the summer of 1917 to the Central Executive Committee. By the Party he was elected to the new-formed Politbureau and to the management of the five central papers that carried the Bolshevik ferment to the front line trenches and out into the far-off steppes and forests. At the Sixth Congress, as spokesman of Lenin, who was in hiding, he helped to chart the course of the October uprising. He helped to give political leadership to the Committee of Seven. In the Committee of Five, he directed the movements of the Red Guards, the storming of the Winter Palace. After the Revolution, as Commissar of Nationalities, he put into effect his long-worked-out plan of uniting the 189 races and nations by a policy of "cohesion without coercion." That is his outstanding contribution to the science of statecraft. To him is due primarily the Soviets' policy of cultural autonomy and independence towards the minorities which stopped their breaking up into separate states and welded them together into a single political-economic entity. He was also Commissar of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, appointed to cut through the tangles of red tape and bureaucracy that were strang-

ling the State.

Although he was the only Bolshevik heading two commissariats, each of prime importance, still heavier responsibilities were laid on him. With the Soviets threatened by complete annihilation by the armies of intervention, he was called upon to take on military duties, to transform himself from civilian into a soldier.

While Trotzky was commander-in-chief of the armies, Stalin was entrusted with the main problems of the "inner defence." As member of the Supreme War Council he initiated some of its most effective strategy. As master organizer he was transformed into "an expert in cleaning out the stables of the war department," keeping the supplies moving to the fronts, mobilizing the forces in rear, replacing the incompetent or hostile. But he did not long stay in the rear. Whenever a front was cracking up, or a life-and-death struggle was being waged, there was Stalin—tireless, sleepless, nerveless—seeking to infuse his steel will into the panic-stricken, reducing chaos to order.

He took over the defence of Tsaritzyn in 1918, the "Red Verdun" on the Volga, now called Stalingrad because of what he did there twenty-four years ago. He was sent as Commissar of Supplies to get grain started up the Volga for northern armies and cities. The attack by White armies on Tsaritzyn threatened, as the Nazi armies of 1942 do, to cut off the whole grain region of the South. To do his job of getting supplies, Stalin had to save the city. He found the military situation chaotic. He reported conditions to Lenin and was put in command. He cleaned out conspiracies and inefficiency. Voroshilov, retreating across the Don steppes before the Germans, joined Stalin and Timoshenko in this Volga city, and thus reinforced they drove back the enemy and started the flow of grain into the hunger-stricken capital. Later Stalin injected discipline into the drunken and demoralized army of the Urals and turned their disastrous retreat into an offensive. He over-rode the naval experts

and, recapturing the "Red Hill" and "Grey Horse" forts by frontal assault from the sea, broke up Yudenich's drive on Petrograd. He conceived the idea of sending the famous First Cavalry Army under Budenny on its thousand-mile raid across the steppes to the rout of the Polish forces. From front to front he was sent by the Supreme War Council devising new tactics, steadying the wavering lines, crushing out conspiracies behind them, weeding out traitors and incompetents in the staffs, promoting the rank-and-file to high commands . . . extending his already deep insight into men that was to prove invaluable in the new post he was to fill.

By no coup d'etat did Stalin seize the reins of government. Nor did he arbitrarily arrogate to himself the vast power he exercises. They were bestowed upon him as secretary of the Communist Party. To this office he was elected in 1922, and has held it ever since. So solid is his position that the Party disregarded even Lenin's so-called "last testament," in which it is said that his removal was suggested, and has refused to accept his twice-tendered resignation. Nonetheless he has been vitriolically assaulted from all sides. For putting the emphasis on reconstruction at home, he was reviled by the Left Opposition as a "narrow nationalist," a "traitor to the world revolution." For keeping up at all costs the terrific pace of industrialization, he was assailed by the Right Opposition as an "adventurer, hurrying the country into hunger and chaos." In addition to all the abusive epithets used against Lenin, he has been called "an Asiatic despot," "Tammany boss," "unprincipled demagogue," "bureaucratic, unscrupulous, crafty, and cunning."

Over against these diatribes of his enemies may be set down the estimate of Ambassador Joseph E. Davies who says, "Stalin is the type of man who knows how to lay out a long-range plan and prefers to reach his objectives by patient planning. He loves to set up the pins and then move them about, again and again, until he has anticipated every detail. Thus I should attribute his success to three factors: his

strong physique, his well-balanced nervous system, and his character, with its wisdom, knowledge of human nature, horse sense, and singleness of purpose... ..If Stalin had been born in America, he would have been outstanding in any field—as a politician, labour leader, business man, worker, or professional man. My guess is that Stalin would have gone into public life because of his sympathy for the underprivileged and his desire to bring about a better life for the masses.”

In addition to these qualities stressed by Davies, is one that appeals particularly to the Soviet people. That is the great simplicity of the man in private life and public address. Contrary to accepted notions, the Russians are swayed far less by flights of oratory than by plain facts. Just as they turned from the spellbinder Kerensky to the logical Lenin, so they did from the brilliant rhetorical Trotzky to the matter-of-fact Stalin, whose precise, clear-cut speeches are lit up only by a touch of humour or biting satire. Quite as unostentatious is he in dress, bearing, and manner of life. With his wife, the sister of Kaganovich, he lives in a modest three-room apartment in the Kremlin, and has a house in the country an hour away from Moscow. With simple, almost ascetic tastes, he prefers the classics, enjoys the company of old comrades who, with him, were unswerving in devotion to the cause from the beginning.

Outweighing everything else in enhancing his prestige is the fact that for some fifteen years in the eyes of the people he has been right. That is why they not only have kept him so long as head of the Party, but have now made him Premier and Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army. He has become a symbol of what they have all done together.

In the coming years everything depends on whether, after the Soviets together with the United Nations have won the war, they and their allies succeed in establishing a system of collective security throughout the world. Security at last from the constant fear of invasion will give full release to the immense productive capacities in the Soviet system and

its people. There should be a rapid rise in their material well-being and general culture. On the basis of this richer, more abundant life should follow a freer life—the expansion of those “four freedoms” of the Atlantic Charter. With the necessity for restraints and repressions gone, these rights and liberties written into the “Stalin Constitution” will for the first time have the opportunity to be put into full effect. If these things should come to pass, and if Stalin takes a leading part in them, then his standing in the eyes of the Soviet people and the world will hardly be lower than Lenin’s.

7. HOW IS THE COUNTRY GOVERNED?*

Article 1 of the Constitution reads: The Union of "Soviet Socialist Republics is a socialist state of workers and peasants." "Our society is socialist," said Stalin, "because private ownership of factories, plants, land, banks and transportation has been abolished and replaced by public property."

The Constitution goes on to state that a citizen may own what he can use—a home, automobile, a few animals, furniture, library, personal belongings, savings. What he earns by his own labors is his to use, to enjoy and to dispose of as he sees fit. What he cannot do is own directly the wealth-producing properties of the nation—oil fields, forests, sugar refineries, steel plants, coal mines. These belong to the whole people and are administered by the State.

All the apparatus of government is set up to function to this end, beginning with the local Soviets of Workers' Deputies wherein, the Constitution further states, is lodged "the power of the working people of town and country."

But Soviet is not a new word coined by the Bolsheviks. It is an old Russian word which means simply "council." In the old days there was a Soviet of beekeepers, medical workers, a Soviet of ministers of the Tsar. On the main Kremlin Gate was a celestial figure—the Angel of the Soviet! In 1905 the word took on a revolutionary meaning when it was applied to those committees that directed the first general uprising against the Tsar. These first Soviets were crushed.

With the downfall of the Tsar in 1917 they rose up again all over the land—in villages, factories, mines and battleships. A remarkable phenomenon but nothing mysterious about it. Something akin to this occurred in the American Revolution.

* The Socialist Soviet Constitution gives all the clauses in full'. (The Socialist Literature Publishing Co., Agra).

Throughout the colonies, outside the old forms of government, sprang up hundreds of Committees of Public Safety, headed by the Continental Congress that later on became the government.

In like manner, those local "councils" in Russia sent their delegates up to Petrograd to a general Congress of Soviets. This grew rapidly in power and prestige, rallied increasing support from the people, performed the tasks of the old government that was falling to pieces—and on November 7, 1917, became the government.

In the functioning of these Soviets, varying in size from some twenty members in a village to over 2,000 in the city Soviet of Moscow, four points are to be noted :

First, their work is more extensive than similar bodies in non-socialist lands as it embraces wide fields of enterprise elsewhere left in private hands. For example, local Soviets are responsible, not only for schools, roads, taxes, but also for local industries, stores and housing. In wartime they must not only evacuate the population from the battle zone, but must be the first to return to the recaptured towns, rebuild the houses and set the factory wheels turning.

Second, their sessions are short as most of the deputies have their own jobs and professions where they earn their living. The worker goes back to his factory, farm or fishing-fleet; the teacher returns again to his school; others to their posts in the Red Army, the air fleet or the Arctic. The aim is to avoid a sharp distinction between the governing and the governed—to avoid the creation of professional politicians.

Third, their members must report often and fully to their constituents and, if failing to satisfy them, are subject to recall. Two or three times yearly they have to give an account of their stewardship. As their duties and responsibilities relate to the daily needs of everyone - food, shelter and clothes—theirs is an intimate tie-up between citizens and their representatives.

Fourth, as the activities of the Soviets are continuous,

each Soviet chooses from its members a strong standing Executive Committee which functions all the time. As there is no sharp separation between the legislative and executive functions, the same body which makes rules also carries them out through its committees.

These characteristics are common to all Soviets, beginning with the 70,000 local ones at the base of the structure. Above these rise the Soviets of the *rayon* or county ; next, those of the regions, provinces, territories ; next, the Soviets of the sixteen republics. At the apex of this pyramid stands the Supreme Soviet, the sovereign power in the country.

From the Supreme Soviet all federal legislative and executive organs derive their authority. Unless specially convened, it assembles twice a year for short sessions in the former gold-and-marble Imperial Throne Room of the Moscow Kremlin. This parliament, composed of 1,298 members, elected for a term of four years, is divided into two chambers. The *Council of the Union* consists of 621 deputies, elected by the people every four years, one deputy, for every 300,000 inhabitants. The *Council of Nationalities* consists likewise of 677 directly elected members on a basis of twenty-five deputies from each constituent republic, eleven from each autonomous republic, five from each autonomous region and one from each national district. Its function is to introduce and temper legislation to fit the special interests, culture and customs of the 189 nationalities or ethnic groups.

The Supreme Soviet is a live forum or tribune where demands from the far corners of the Union receive national hearing and consideration. For example, the representatives from Central Asia may ask for a larger appropriation for irrigation ; those from the Arctic better flying fields ; from the Far East aid for settlers and gold prospectors ; rural deputies may argue against the new tax on horses. And so on.

The deputies who bring these matters before the public are the most noted, popular, famous, trusted leaders from each district. They are not politicians. True, they are paid

something for attending sessions during their term of office, but they earn their living at home. The full time government work is carried on by members of the permanent standing committees on Legislation, Foreign Affairs and the Budget, whose findings are embodied in bills which must be passed by a majority of both Houses to become law.

Between sessions, the work of the Supreme Soviet is carried on by its Presidium or Executive Committee consisting of forty-two members. Mikhail Kalinin, as Chairman, is often but incorrectly called President of the Soviet Union. He hears the complaints and petitions of individuals and delegations coming up to Moscow from all over the Soviet land; exchanges greetings with the heads of other nations; receives foreign ambassadors. In the Presidium, as the supreme authority of the country when parliament is not sitting, is focused tremendous executive power. It convenes sessions, interprets laws, conducts referenda on its own initiative or on demand of the republics, awards decorations, grants pardons, issues administrative edicts, appoints and removes officials and the high commands of the armed forces. It was this body that declared war against Germany. Eight days after the Nazi invasion it appointed and concentrated all governmental power in a single "war cabinet" of five, then eight, men with Stalin as chairman, the *State Defence Committee* which takes immediate action on all important matters. It represents the best combination of personal ability and experience in fields essential to the conduct of the war.

Chief administrative organ set up by the Supreme Soviet is the Council of People's Commissars, *Sovnarkom*, with Stalin as chairman or Premier. It is charged with carrying out most of the ordinary measures necessary to the functioning of the country. In peacetime it corresponds to the cabinet in other nations; but as all property is in the hands of the State it not only attends to Foreign Affairs, Trade, Navy, Defence, and such matters, but its forty-three Commissars head various branches of industry, agriculture, and transpor-

tation. It is just as though the Post Office Department in the United States Cabinet added to itself all radio, cable, telegraph and telephone systems and was called the Commissariat of Communications.

Who Votes and How? In 1919 Lenin forecast that in the not distant future, the Soviets would "introduce universal suffrage without any restriction." It took, however, over seventeen years to reach that goal. That was in 1937 when the first general elections were held under the new Constitution and the voting was universal, equal, direct and secret.

Universal means that every citizen—man or woman—on reaching eighteen years of age has a vote. In the first general election the one scheduled for 1941 was postponed on account of the war, 94 million were eligible to vote and 97 per cent actually voted. This was a great stride forward in the political education of the Soviet people.

Equal means that the vote of every person counts one. This marked the end of discrimination against the peasants whose vote hitherto had counted only about a third of that of the factory worker. It marked also the end of the disfranchisement of certain classes—merchants, priests, kulaks—on the ground that they were opposed to the Revolution. Now all are on the same footing.

Secret means that the voter carried his ballot into a booth and marked it in private. Hitherto they had lifted their hands in public meeting. One reason for that was that so many could not even read the name of their candidates. The new method reflected the great advance in the literacy of the country.

Direct means that all deputies are chosen directly by the people. It ended the earlier method of electing deputies only to local Soviets while the higher ones were composed of members delegated from the one below. By the old method, Soviets at the top were several steps removed from the people and their control. Now each voter knows whom he

is sending, not only to the local Soviet but to the Provincial, the Republic and the Supreme Soviet.

All this seems very much like the technique of elections in western countries. But it differs in two ways: *First*, the candidates for office are nominated through organizations such as the youth, sport, defence, cultural, scientific technical groups; by co-operatives, labour unions and the Communist Party. In practice all candidates are approved by the Party. *Second*, there is seldom more than one candidate—at any rate it was so in the first election.

In replying to the criticism this evoked Stalin said that “political parties are the expression of opposing classes and interests.” Due to property ownership - the farmer, the industrialist, the capitalist and wage worker have different interests and hence different parties. In the Soviet Union where property is nationalized and the interest of all citizens is in the proper management of their economic affairs, there is no necessity for more than one party or one candidate. In non-official primaries or general district meetings open to all, many possible names are brought forward. Qualifications are discussed. By a process of elimination, agreement is, in time, reached at to the one most fitted to advance the interests of the group. The same procedure obtains in the United States in nominating the directors of a big corporation or club. It even obtains in our elections when one candidate wins all the primaries and becomes fusion candidates on the final ticket. In the Soviets, where no paid job or a political life career is at stake, the consideration is the best man for the place. For example, Ambassador Troyanovsky was nominated, in the unofficial primaries, as delegate to the Supreme Soviet from a Lenin-grad district. He declined the nomination. Why? Because his rival was Litvinov, whom he considered the better man. With war impending the chief concern of the Soviets was in getting the job well done. They were more intent on results than in contests for offices.

Another example of the way in which this unofficial pri-

mary works is told by Thomas L. Harris of a village near Gorky. The slate of candidates for the election contained the names of two rabid anti-religious persons. The priest thought this might presage an attempt to close the church. His vestrymen thereupon went to the Communist Party and said that if the two "Godless" remained on the ticket they would have to vote against it. While the Communists knew that they had a majority, they gave heed to the objections and accordingly, after discussion, two satisfactory, non-Party people were substituted. The compromise ticket got more than 90 per cent of the vote. Thus an opposition reasonably but firmly expressed has effective influence.

The Soviet people not only say that they are more democratic than we are, but they believe it. Lenin remarked that the way out of parliamentarianism is not to abolish representative institutions, but to transform them from mere "talking shops into working bodies." No one can say that the Soviets are not working bodies. Looking into the future Lenin predicted the beginning of a happy epoch when "not only politicians and lawyers, but engineers and agronomists will speak from the tribune of our Congresses."

This has been realized. For the Supreme Soviet represents the most eminent and active citizens in all realms of life—engineers, agronomists, army officers, writers musicians, miners, tractor-driver. And as at the top, so all the way down through the tiers of Soviets to the bottom.

In the multifarious activities of the 70,000 Soviets, besides the million or more regularly elected deputies, several million more citizens are enlisted as volunteers. About the same procedure is followed in the labor unions, co-operatives, the innumerable civic societies and leagues. Because of this wide participation of the people, observers like the Webbs maintain that the term "dictatorship" is a misnomer. Rather it is really a democracy, differing in form and technique from the West, but nevertheless a democracy in the sense that it gives the people the opportunity to express their will and determine the conditions of work and life.

8. COMMUNISTS, BUREAUCRATS, PURGES*

What is the force that holds the huge Soviet apparatus together and keeps it going? Manifestly something powerful. With every opportunity for red tape, friction, legislative deadlocks, one might wonder why the whole vast machine does not get hopelessly gummed up or break down altogether. That it does not is due to the Communists, main-springs of action, infusing life and energy into all the parts.

The Communists are distinct from the Soviets. This difference should be grasped at the outset. There are 193,000,000 citizens of the Soviet Union, of which only 4,500,000 (July, 1942) are members of, or candidates for, the Communist Party. But birth or residence in the Soviet Union one is citizen; through choice one belongs to the Party. The Government and the Party run parallel, each with its own officials, organs, headquarters, magazines. From the Party "unit," composed of all Communists in a given village, office, Soviet, labor union, regiment, ship . . . up to the All-Union Party Congress with its policy-making Politbureau, there is a close resemblance to the structure of the government. It is the Soviet Government, however, that is the sovereign power in the country.

Though distinct from the government, the Communists largely control it. They control it much more than the Democrats do the American government or the Conservatives the British. There is no secret about this. "The Party openly admits," says Stalin, "that it guides and gives general direction to the government." This is putting it modestly. As the only legal party the Communists enjoy a complete monopoly in the political field. Almost automatically the Party decision of today becomes the Soviet law of tomorrow. Almost

* Cf A Short History of the C. P. S. U. (B). The Peoples Publishing House, Bombay 4.

exactly as the Five-Year Plans are outlined by the Party, they are adopted by the government.

Control is achieved, not by arbitrary imposition of the Party's will, but by using its tremendous influence and prestige. As a compact, disciplined body with all its parts moving into action as a single unit, presenting a solid front on every issue, it carries decisive weight in every council. Members of the Party, pledged to carrying out its directives, are commissars in the cabinet, make up three-fourths of the Supreme Soviet, head most of the trusts and universities, staff the high commands of Red Army. They likewise hold most of the key positions in the labour unions, co-operatives, and press. Upon its members in these organizations using "their influence and all their arts of persuasion," the Party depends for carrying out its policies. If they do not, it straightway discredits, demotes, or deposes them.

As the Party, through its members taking the brunt of the work and responsibility, controls the government and influences the people, so it is also a sensitive instrument for ascertaining the people's ideas and wishes. "Among them," said Lenin, "we are a drop in the sea and we can govern only if we adequately express what they feel." Standing not above and apart from the people, but penetrating into the farthest reaches of the land with its 130,000 local units, it knows at first hand their wants and needs.

Not only does the Communist Party know what the people want, but it knows what it wants and out of an analysis of laws and forces, has charted a way for getting it. Its aim is Communism, the creation of a new society by a change in the property basis out of which will come a complete change in the superstructure of ethics and institutions. Toward this goal it drives forward, often changing its tactics, but never its objective.

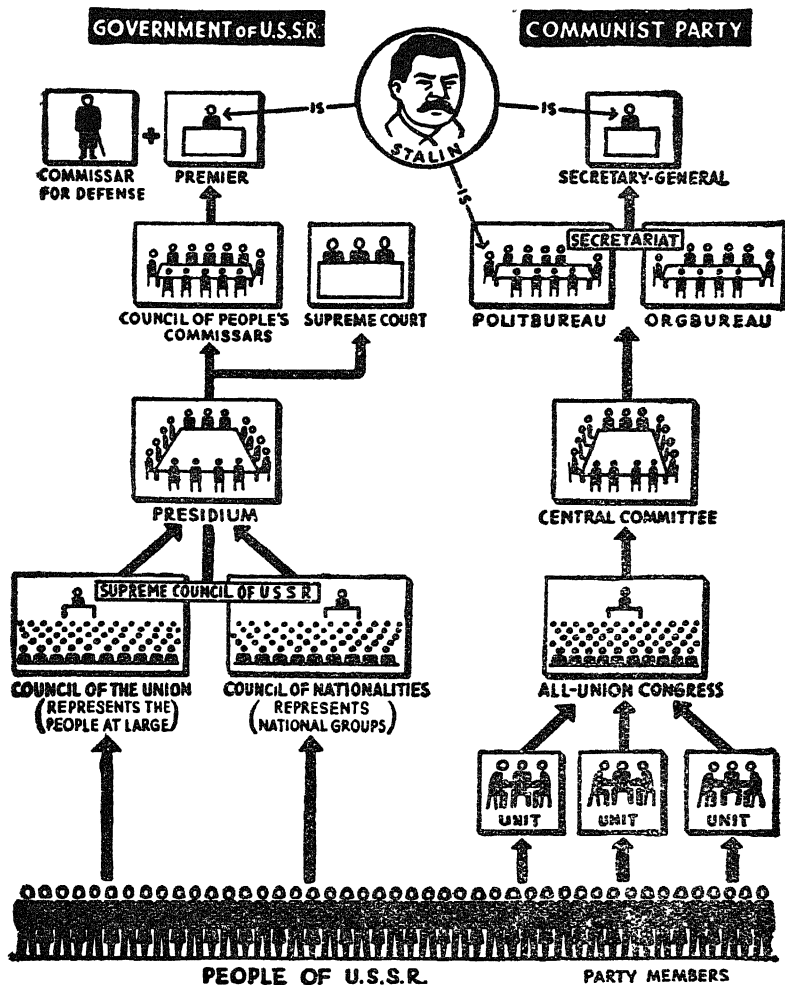
Duties and Privileges of Communists. Feeling an urge to join, one appears before the local branch of the Party as an

applicant, sponsored by three party members of five years standing. After a check-up on character, conduct, and loyalty to Communist aims and principles, he is entered on the rolls as a candidate. Thereupon he becomes a student in a school of "political grammar," while his manner of life is kept under close scrutiny. This period of instruction lasts one year: It ends with an examination by a committee of the Party: "In joining is he motivated by ideas of his own self-advancement? Does he understand his civic duties? Is he addicted to drink? What company does he keep? Has he any traces of bourgeois mentality?" If he is approved by a majority vote, he receives the red booklet of a full-fledged member.

From the moment he becomes a member, his time, talents and energies are at the disposal of the Party. What it tells him, he must do, regardless of danger, risk or personal desire. His own wishes will be considered, but the last word lies with Party. Where it sends him, he must go and without murmuring. Comfortably living in Moscow today, tomorrow he may be drafted to one of the fighting fronts. At an hour's notice he must pack up his things and start for some lone trading station in the Arctic, a blast furnace in the Urals, a lookout on the Manchukuo border, a guerrilla outpost behind the German lines.

Wherever he goes, it is no ordinary service that is demanded of him. Always Lenin insisted that there was no place in the Party for the mere believer or well-wisher—only for the man of deeds. Outside of earning a living at his regular job, he must actively engage in some social work. It may be as organiser of a shock-brigade, as a speaker for the Defence Fund, or taking part in the war effort as a "200 Percenter," which means turning out double his own work quota. There is hardly an able Communist without at least two or three extra assignments over and above his routine work in the local "unit" to which he belongs. It is a terrific drain upon his strength and vitality—putting verve into mass meetings, inducing fellow workers to take extra

HOW THE U.S.S.R. IS RULED



(From *Russia at War*, by Vera Micheles Dean.
(New York: Foreign Policy Association.)

mechanical courses, sitting through late-into-the-night conferences so essential to the Russian way of doing things. And what is it all for? To explain that to the satisfaction of others, the Communist must first understand it himself,—theory, tactics and current events. To zeal, all the time he must be adding knowledge.

As he had to go to school before joining the Party, so he has to keep going. For this purpose an elaborate educational system is run and supported by the Party itself. Schools of "political grammar," teaching the Communist Manifesto, the role of the tractor in the liberation of the villages, the influence of such writers as Tolstoy and Gorky. Above them, the Communist universities and institutes of research. This rule includes the higher officials who have their own Marx-Lenin "circles," seminars and reading courses. Even Kalinin, as he once told me, never went to sleep before reading at least one chapter in a good book. In the midst of the Revolution, harassed by a thousand problems, Lenin found time to write his *State and Revolution*, and revise his long treatise on agriculture in America. While constantly reading and studying he was always urging others to do likewise. In the spring of 1918 I told him I was leaving for home. What could be more important than explaining to America the events in Russia? So I thought, but not Lenin. Why not stay on a while longer," he said, "and learn more about our history, principles and aim?" afterwards he went to Boris Reinstein, suggesting that we form a little group for study. Maybe you can get four or five together, and I'll find time once a week to drop in and lead you."

With theory goes study of the Party program so that every member may know what to do and why he is doing it. At the same time there is practical training in leadership and management, whereby a man of diligence and ability may rise to high positions. But woe to a Communist who show that he is interested in a position because it is lucrative. A Communist must live a life of relative simplicity. In a comparatively

poor country to give up the idea of luxury or amassing fortune is not a great sacrifice.

But it is sacrifice to give up one's personal opinions, and that is one which the Communist may be called upon to make. For he must always hew to the "Party Line." That means the line of action by which the policies, as mapped out by the Party Congress, are made effective. Although this line often changes, the Communist must change with it. He must be ready to fall in with the new tactics to meet new conditions. After debate and discussion, though the decision may not accord with his previous convictions, once the majority has spoken the matter is settled. The Party holds that the fate of the Revolution rests upon unity of mind and action—that any "deviation" spells disruption and disaster.

Not for a moment will the Party tolerate any individual, however brilliant he may be, who acts upon his own will and judgment alone. It was this that brought the fall of Trotzky with his demand for more drastic measures against the kulaks, and for "world revolution" as opposed to the policy of building socialism in the Soviet Union, advocated by Stalin. In defying the Party statutes, he set up a faction with its own program, secret pass words and printing press. To the Party it was sheer treason, a menace to itself and the country. It roused against him the indignation of the people and lost him the support of most of his own followers. Many of them, at first approving his ideas, became outraged at his tactics, and he was ejected from the Party and from Russia.

Heavy as are the burden and obligations a communist takes upon himself, they are balanced by certain compensations. If he must bear the onus for the blunders and failures of the Party, he shares also the glory of its successes. A certain prestige comes to him as a "Leninist." He is usually chosen by his fellows as their spokesman. His red booklet is a passport opening many doors closed to the ordinary citizen. If he must work hard, his chances of promotion are greater, for high positions of trust are preferentially given to Com-

munists. Attached to them are certain perquisites in the form of better quarters, automobiles, secretaries—serving to magnify one's feeling of importance and power. If there is any priority in admission to rest homes, hospitals, or schools, it will probably favour the Party man. If at all times the member has to put first interests of the Party, it is likewise to the interest of the Party to look after its members.

Bureaucracy and Purges. A constant evil with which Communists have to contend both in their own ranks and every Soviet institution is bureaucracy. "Russia," declared Lenin, "is a Soviet State disfigured by bureaucracy," and characteristically he placed the blame upon himself and his colleagues.

In like fashion Stalin and Kaganovich keep assailing the "chair warmers," "leaders indulging in speechmaking and soothsaying instead of betaking themselves to their jobs," and departments "in which everyone gives orders except those who are too lazy." One need only listen to American engineers complaining about time lost in "paper-work"—getting reports to Moscow, waiting for Moscow to reply. Or one may turn to a file of Soviet newspapers or magazines like *Crocodile*, satirizing ten tea-drinking clerks doing the work of one, or a consignment of right-footed boots sent to one village and to compensate for it, all the left-footed ones sent to another!

So ingrained in the Russian is the instinct for bureaucracy that frequently even in their efforts to get rid of it they create more of it. Are there too many commissions? Very well, appoint a new commission to look into this!

What are the reasons for all this? In the first place there are the functionaries inherited from the old regime, versed in all the arts of procrastination, indolence, and evasion. Secondly, it is due to the deliberate sabotage of fifth columnists seeking to discredit the Soviet power by creating breakdowns, delays, and other difficulties. A third reason is the sheer incompetence of persons without previous experience, thrust into positions that for expert knowledge and training,

Ignorance is sometimes more disastrous than malice.

Another factor is the inherent complexity of a huge, cumbersome apparatus that deals with everything from production of pins to instruction in philosophy. For example, the commissariats of the *Sovnarkom* have increased in a few years from 18 to 43. Finally, there still survives some of that fatalism and passivity in the masses, who for centuries were so accustomed to be browbeaten and befooled by bureaucrats that they expect nothing better from them and accept it unprotestingly.

The struggle against bureaucracy is conducted in various ways. By endeavouring to create a new attitude among the hosts of civil servants—a public office is a public trust. By simplifying the whole apparatus of government—transferring authority from the centres to the localities. By opening offices all over the land in which a citizen may lodge complaint against any official, pointing out failures, blunders, and waste. By the *Rabselkor* movement with its four million volunteer correspondents pouring a stream of items into the papers about the misdeeds of petty autocrats, saboteurs, loafers, and grafters. By the screen and the stage, on which even during such a crisis as the siege of Stalingrad¹ is presented the new caustically critical play, *The Front*, pointing out faults and weaknesses in the Red Army itself.

Finally, there is the constant scrutiny exercised by the two argus-eyed control commissions of Party and Government. One way in which undesirables are weeded out is by the periodical cleanings, or *chistkas* of local Party units. In meetings to which the public is usually invited, everyone in a given enterprise—from manager to floor-sweeper—must appear before a committee to give an account of his conduct and services.

There is every reason for his making it accurate, for at any moment someone in the audience may rise up to point out an important omission in his story, or remind him of

*Cf *Stalingrad Fights on*: The Socialist Literature Publishing Co Agra.

instances when he was high-handed, bullying, irascible, or stalling for a bribe.

The severest tests and grilling are reserved for the Communist. He has assumed higher obligations and, failing to live up to them, he may be summarily expelled from the Party. The Party has never measured its strength by mere numbers. It could easily double or triple its membership. But only in times of crisis and peril have the bars for admission into the Party been let down. Such was the case in 1918 when the White Armies were closing in upon Moscow. To join at such a moment was proof of one's sincerity and devotion. So again in this war, when any Communist falling into the hands of the Nazis is in danger of being shot or hanged. Yet from both the guerilla bands and the Red Army there has been a great influx of members into the Party—seven times greater than from the civilian population. In the first year of this war 752,000 joined the Party as against 233,000 in the year preceding it.

How long one stays in the Party depends on how one lives up to its rules. For while it is difficult to enter the Party, it is easy to get out. One may be expelled for drunkenness, showing contempt of other races, "using his office to obtain favors from women," associating without good reason with foreigners, flouting Party discipline—while factionalism is the seven deadly sins rolled into one.

When a Party member comes before the committee of examiners, he hands over his red booklet of membership. Then he must stand up and give good reasons why it should be handed back to him. Failing to do so, he is dropped from the Party. In this way thousands annually are stricken from the rolls. In the great "housecleaning" or purge of 1935 to 1938 nearly a half million were expelled. Among them were many who were not only ejected from the Party, but were arrested by the government secret police, the NKVD, and charged with sabotage, treason, conspiring with foreign foes of the Soviets. Among those executed were eight generals of

the Red Army and thirty-seven leading Bolsheviks of the Right Opposition, while tens of thousands of their followers were jailed, exiled and put into concentration camps.

This, of course, created consternation in the Soviet Union. But it was nothing compared to the furor and shock it created abroad. The purge was depicted as a massacre and madness. Arriving in Moscow at the very height of it, when the Soviet radio and press were pounding home to Russians the warning of coming war and the danger of saboteurs and spies. I tried to give an old worker friend of mine there some idea of what Americans were thinking of all this. I told him that genuine friends of the Soviet Union were deeply perturbed by the handling of the oppositionists.

"Tell them not to worry at all," he reassured me; "tell them we are getting the bastards into jail as fast as we can."

That the leading figures who were executed were for the most part guilty of the crimes with which they were charged, and to which they confessed, was not only the conviction of the Soviet people as a whole, but of practically every foreign diplomat, lawyer, and correspondent present at the trials, as Ambassador Joseph E. Davies has pointed out in *Mission to Moscow*.*

In the perspective of today, with a larger experience of Nazi methods of infiltration and suborning of leaders of a country before assaulting it, the purge is being reappraised. Reading the testimony of Bukharin, one of the defendants, in the trial of 1938, one can see how dissatisfaction can grow into treason and treachery, how Soviet fifth columnists are made. These men could not reconcile themselves to the leadership of others whom they deemed their inferiors, and continued to hold that without world revolution Socialism in the Soviet Union was foredoomed to failure. They counted on a turn in affairs elevating them again to power, and when that did not eventuate, according to their

own confessions, they resorted to sabotage, assassination and plotting with foreign enemies.

While the leaders of these factions were being routed out, imprisoned or executed, there was a tremendous purge of the entire apparatus of the Party and the State. It was frequently carried out in a ruthless, arbitrary, and reckless manner. In this atmosphere, suspicion was sometimes cast upon the most honest and conscientious Party members and charges brought against them on false and trivial grounds. This led to a purge of the purgers, putting an end to such abuses. By the new Party rule of 1939, the standing of each member is carefully safeguarded.

One fact emerges most clearly. The purges did not produce the permanent weakness and dissension that were predicted. On the contrary, of all the nations invaded by the Nazis, the Soviet Union showed the greatest resistance and solidarity. In the words of Anthony Eden, "It is a country without a Quisling." This, of course, is an overstatement. Among a nation of 193 million there are some with a grudge and a grievance against the government. But Hitler seems unable to find them. Instead, he is confronted with a solid array of millions of fighting workers, with well-organized and correlated industry in the rear steadily pouring out quantities of arms and ammunition.

This performance of Soviet industry brings up another aspect of the purge. It was not, as was generally believed, confined entirely to political dissidents and saboteurs. It was also directed against the deadwood and dry rot in the Soviet apparatus, against the bureaucrats, obstructionists and loafers. Thousands of directors, managers, superintendents long entrenched in office, were removed from their jobs.

From the sudden loss of these experienced staff members, it might be expected that industry would suffer—and it did! The output of factories during 1937 dropped steadily. But the shake up had one good effect on those who remained. It rendered them more alert and efficient. They came earlier

to office and they stayed later.

Also, it must be kept in mind that Russia has vast reserves of men and brain-power to draw upon. It is, as already stated, pre-eminently a country of youth. Into the vacated positions moved up thousands of new managers, directors, superintendents—less experienced, but more aggressive, imaginative, and loyal. This infusion of new blood and brains is certainly one factor in the mounting output of Soviet factories today.

In a word, what other countries are doing in the midst of the war to rejuvenate and reorganize their economic and social life, and put it on a war footing the Soviet Union did in the years preceding the war. It got rid, not only of its Quislings, defeatists, and appeasers, but of a great number of its bureaucrats, "brass hats," and incompetents.

It was a severe ordeal, but it was one great factor in preparing the country for the greater ordeal of war.

9. THE SOVIETS PLAN FOR WAR AND PEACE*

The aim of planning is to determine in advance what is to be produced, who shall produce it and how much of it shall be produced. In this war all governments resort to some sort of planning. They allocate materials, fix prices, ration commodities, limit exports, expand credit, compel savings, decide which industries are to be fostered, which retarded, and where new ones shall be built.

What other governments are now doing in war, the Soviets have been doing in peace. They have been doing it for twenty years on a far larger scale, in a far more systematic, all-embracing, drastic manner.

It was easier for the Soviets to do so, for the concept of planning is inherent in socialism. But they did not undertake it from any abstract principle. It was forced upon them. In their hands were most of the big mills and mines, transport, land and the banks. Thus they had got rid of the private owners, that chief obstacle to planning in other countries. They did not have to consider their interests, haggle with, coerce or cajole them. But on the other hand, all these enterprises would not automatically produce and distribute goods. In order to function properly they must somehow be co-ordinated and told what to do. They all had to be made to mesh and and synchronize. It was either to plan or perish.

In 1920 Lenin put forward the first projects, the Ten-Year Plan of Electrification (which remained on paper so long it was called *Electrification*). Next year was founded the *Gosplan* which was to become the directing brain of all the nation's activities. Then in 1928 was launched the first of the cele-

* Two informative books by Maurice Dobb are recommended:

(1) *Soviet Economy in War*;

(2) *Soviet Planning and Labour in Peace and War*.

brated series of Five-Year Plans. Their purpose was fourfold:

To raise the standard of living of all the people. To lift this agrarian land out of its poverty and backwardness and bring it into line with the foremost industrial nations of the world. "We are from 50 to 100 years behind the advanced countries," said Stalin in 1931. We must run through this distance in 10 years. Either we do this or they will crush us. Hence the popular slogan: "To overtake and surpass America." In per capita income and national income, mechanical power and industrial output, America was far away in the lead. In a series of Five-Year Plans, the Soviets sought to close the gap—under forced draft to reach the level of America.

To provide through large scale abundant production the basis for the good society. The economy of plenty will give every man all requisities for his creature and cultural well-being. The shift from muscles to machines will give him the leisure and strength to enjoy them to the full. At the same time through the mutual dependence and discipline it enforces, large industry prepares the citizen for the future society. "Through socialized work to the social man."

To free the country from dependence on other nations. Because Tsarist Russia was non-industrial, it imported most of its machines, chemicals, agricultural implements. From this necessity Soviet Russia aimed to liberate itself by producing these things at home. This does not imply that it championed the Fascist doctrine of national self-sufficiency. On the contrary, it envisages a world-plan in which each country specializes in the products for which it is most fitted and delivers them to the places most needed. This is, of course, a vision of the future. As it was alone socialist state encircled by hostile powers who might at any time cut off supplies vital to its existence, it sought to bring to completion every essential industry.

To fortify the country against war. It is impossible to exaggerate the fear of assault from a coalition of hostile powers which has pervaded the Soviet people for the last twenty

years. Old Russia had repeatedly gone down to defeat because it was woefully lacking in transport and technique. These defects the Soviet Union sought to remedy. By rapid industrialization by mechanization of the farms, by education and military training, it set out to hold its own in the coming war of airplanes, tanks and gasses.

When the Soviet Union announced its first big, all-embracing plan, it was greeted almost with amusement. The very idea of this poor, backward, ne'er-do-well country competing with the strong and the mighty was ludicrous. And of all peoples, how could these anarchic, indolent, impractical, undisciplined, music-and-vodka-loving Russians work out a complex plan for an ordered society? And if they did, how could they carry it through? It was dismissed as a "blueprint of the millennium," "a statistician's dream," "a romance of engineering."

But the Soviets went ahead translating their dream and romance into a reality. After the First Plan came the Second and Third Plan. What they achieved in industry, farming, education, culture is told in detail and at length throughout this book.

In brief, through planning, the Soviets telescoped into a few years the development that in other countries has taken decades. It increased their share of the world's industrial output from 3 per cent to 14 per cent, lifting it from fifth to second place, according to the London *Economist*. It covered the land with great foundries, mills, elevators, power-lines, silos, and tractor-stations. All this was done by a backward country out of its own resources. Unlike America, which in its great era of expansion built its transcontinental railways and industries with the aid of loans from abroad, and unlike Europe receiving billions of American dollars for post-war reconstruction, the Soviet Union was compelled to find its new capital at home. It had to lift itself by its own bootstraps.

It is often said that Soviet planning changed the face of

the Russian land. It likewise changed the character of the Russian people. It placed before them a definite goal on which to focus their minds and energies. It taught them to steel their wills, to discipline their habits, to work intensively. It infused into them the feeling that they were not at the mercy of blind economic forces, but masters of their own destinies.

As planning was an effective instrument in the building up of the country, so it has been in its defence. It enabled the Soviets to locate certain war industries at strategic points away from the border : to build duplicates of essential plants so that if one were destroyed, the other could go on operating. In modern blitz war, victory doesn't necessarily go to the richest nations but to those that can most quickly mobilize their resources. That mobilization which in other countries has consumed precious months or years, in the Soviet Union, thanks to the planning system, was a matter of days or weeks. It enabled them to shift almost overnight from a peacetime economy to one of war ; to make a drastic and immediate cut in consumers' and non-essential goods ; to introduce a system of strict rationing. In the quickest possible time it enabled them to convert the country into an arsenal ; to focus all the energies of the people on the grim business of winning the war.

How a Small Town Plans. In the years preceding the war it was difficult to get much data about planning. Naturally, what went on in the *Gosplan* headquarters in Moscow, which has been called the "conning tower," the "board of economic strategy" of the nation, was a rigidly and carefully guarded affair. But as the slogan has it, "Millions Make the Plan." One could find the planners at work wherever one travelled—on river boats, in co-operatives, labour unions big farms, and hospitals.

In the little town of Kvalinsk I found the Soviet Secretary, Vidensky, toiling late one night over great piles of

Plan diagrams and figures. "Such a lot of figures," I remarked, "for such a little town." A most undiplomatic approach. For while proclaiming himself an ardent internationalist, Vidensky was above all an ardent local patriot as proud and belligerent over Kvalinsk as the "cosmopolite" in O. Henry's story.

"It's a little town," he retorted, "but it does big things. And it would do bigger if *Gosplan* gave us a chance. If cities like Saratov held to the pace and the Plan as well as we do, it wouldn't be long before we overtook America. Take a look at the figures on grain deliveries to the State. This year the Plan called for 12,000 tons. We did that—and 3,000 more."

"Why not?" I interjected. "You had exceptionally good weather and a bumper harvest."

"But will the harvest reap and thresh itself? Will it load itself into boats and the grain elevators? It takes a lot of good organizing, calculating and timing. That's what Kvalinsk has done. And that's why we are ahead of our schedules, not only on grain, but on the number of students in the High School, subscriptions for bonds, the output of sunflower-seed-oil—on everything except the fruit-canning factory. There we are a thousand cases behind. We couldn't find out whether the manager was a Trotskyist and saboteur or just a bungler. Anyhow, we threw him out a month ago."

From the fulfilling of plans, I turned to the technique of making them. How was it done?

"We begin by filling out the *Gosplan* questionnaires. On one form we put down everything we make or grow hereabouts. On another form we list our needs—everything from electric power to schoolbooks, pots and pans. What we want is always much more than what we will get. We know that. We know, too, the Red Army has the first call. But the aim of the Plan is to raise the standard of living for all. So why not ask? The squeaking wheel gets the grease."

"Whom do you ask?"

"First the regional Planning Commission at Saratov. We

go over our report with them. Often they try to get us to raise our figures on production and reduce our figures on consumption. Sometimes we agree, sometimes we fight it out for days. Then the report as revised goes on to Moscow. There the *Gosplan* on the basis of thousands of similar reports from all over the country, and in the light of the 'aims' announced by the party, draws up a Provisional Plan.

"In course of time our part in this comes back to us for study and debate. Every farm, store, labour union has something and either endorses it or amends it. For example, the stevedores insisted that the Volga boat schedule did not allow enough stopover time to load or unload the incoming cargoes—hardly time enough for the passengers to get off. We pointed this out. Evidently there were lots of like protests from the other towns along the river. Anyhow, when the final draft came through, the stopover time was extended."

From such small issues we turned to larger ones. A number of new buildings were going up in and around Kvalinsk.

"Who decided on these buildings, and how and where?"

"First in open hearings in the local Soviet we got the people to say what they thought the community was most in need of. Evidently we needed everything, for there were over a hundred proposals. After discussion and debate in our planning Board, most of them were, of course, rejected."

"For example?"

"One was for a bridge across the Volga, another for a railway along the right bank. When the river freezes over, the only transport we have is by horse and camel caravans over the ice. I myself was for the railway. But the rest of the Board said it was foolish and fantastic to ask for that now. We at last fixed upon eight main projects and with an estimate of their cost, brought them before the Planning Commission in Saratov. The chief things we asked for were a new wharf; two new technicums for training tractorists and machinists; a fire-station with a signal tower as a lookout across

the steppes; and as we have hills of almost pure limestone, we asked for a mill for turning them into cement."

"Why did you want a mill?"

"An American—and you ask such a question! Why, this is the age of the machine! Most of the town up and down the Volga are getting new industries. We don't want Kvalinsk to stay for ever in the backwoods. But *Gosplan* turned us down flat on the cement-mill. They said we had good orchards, good sand beaches, good bathing. Instead of filling the air with cement dust and noise, they would build here more rest homes and sanitariums.

"And the other things on the list?"

"We got everything else, though we had to put up a fight for the new technicums. Our deputy to the Supreme Soviet helped out a lot. He happened to be a good farmer and mechanic so when he went to the last Congress in Moscow, he took up the matter with *Gosplan*—the Agricultural Section. He showed them we must have the new technicums if the 3,000 Tatar and Mordvin boys in our districts were to learn to handle a tractor right. He showed them how the costs would be reduced by volunteer aid from the boys in the building. So we're building them."

He went on to explain how the funds came in as fast as they built, but no faster. An inspector from *Gosplan* came in every month or so to look after this. This is called checking up on fulfilment.

"Oh, yes, one thing more we got," resumed Vidensky "and we didn't ask for it. That is a new sanitarium which can be converted into a hospital."

Understanding the threat of war, he had to admit that this was a good measure. But it was plain to see that in no wise could it compensate for the cement-mill.

"Come back in five years," he concluded, "and you will see a different place."

And probably he would have been right had not the Third Five-Year Plan been suspended, or rather diverted entirely

to the war effort. The projected Fifteen-Year Plan which was to be launched in 1943 will differ greatly from its original outline. Every aspect will be revamped to deal with the disruption, dislocation and destruction of war. But the goal stands—to reach as high a per capita production as in the United States, thereby raising the standard of living for all. Whether that aim can be realized depends on the extent of the ravages of war. But as planning has been an all-important factor in preparing the country for war, so it will be in post-war reconstruction.

10. REVOLUTION ON THE LAND*

Since 1917 Russia has had not one great revolution but four—political, industrial, religious, and agricultural. To many observers the most stupendous and far-reaching was the agricultural revolution, effecting as it did a complete transformation in the tillage of the Soviet soil on a sixth of the earth, and in the lives of its hundred million tillers.

Why did the Soviets undertake it? Was it not enough to get a new kind of government under way? To build up industry almost from scratch? To create a strong fighting force?

But that was just where the program lay. The Soviets could not get on with their problem of industrializing the country, building an army, or giving stability to their government, without an assured supply of food. Workers in factories could not be fed unless the farmer produced more than he himself needed. Factories must have ample raw materials such as cotton, flax, vegetable oils. Essential machines and tools could not be imported unless there was a surplus from the land. But the land was not yielding this surplus. The productivity of the old Russian farms was notoriously low; the yield per acre was almost the smallest in the world.

This was mainly due to the prevailing system by which the village land was divided into three fields. As the peasant said, "God in three persons, the land in three fields!" These in turn were subdivided into the good and the bad, the meadow land and the hill land, the far and the near. To each peasant was allotted a share in each section, so that his "farm" consisted of tiny strips or plots in ten to fifty different places. From above, the country looked like a crazy-quilt of onion

*Cf. *Red Villages*. The Red Star Publications, Benares.

beds. It is hard to conceive of a system so absurdly wasteful and unproductive.

These conditions were only made worse by the Revolution. The Soviet Land Decree of November, 1917, magniloquently proclaimed: "The lands of the crown, the monasteries and the nobility are hereby declared the property of the nation for ever." As a matter of record 90 per cent of these big estates already had been seized by the peasants and divided among themselves, which greatly increased the number of tiny many-field "farms." This catastrophically reduced the amount of grain on the market to half the pre-Revolutionary level.

To increase production it was imperative to use machines, disc-plows, harrows, and reapers. But these could be operated efficiently only on large tracts of land. By converting the 25 million tiny holdings into big compact collective farms, the Soviets chose the only way out.

In doing this the Soviets sought not only to solve their economic problems, but also to release the peasant from his age-old bondage to the soil. With the crudest implements he was compelled to toil like a slave. His wooden plow scarcely more than scratched the surface of the earth. Out of a crib he scattered the seed by hand, much of it to be picked up by crows and ravens. Picturesque to the outsider, but gruelling and body-racking to the peasant. With every man, woman and child toiling from before dawn until after dark, the harvest well deserved the name the peasants gave it, *stradnaya pora*, "the suffering season."

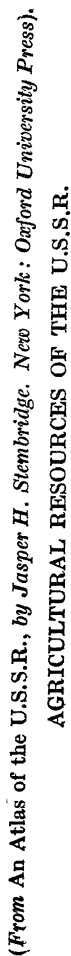
By machinery the Soviet sought to liberate the people from this inhuman strain and free the reserves of labour-power in the village for industry. Back in 1931, in our village of Saburova, 70 miles from Moscow, the progressive peasants formed themselves into an *artel* to rent a tractor for the threshing season. With instinctive dread of the new, the old women in particular were against it. "A device of Satan," they went about mumbling. "It smells of the devil!" A week

later their worst suspicions were confirmed. Into the village came the clanking monster snorting like a devil, shooting smoke and fumes out of its belly, smelling like ten devils. Into their huts ran the old women, crossing themselves in holy fear and crying: "The Anti-Christ is coming!"

But presently the tractor, belted up to the threshing, was working with the energy of a hundred devils. Into its hopper went the russet sheaves, out of its chutes a stream of golden grain and flying straw piling up in stacks that rose like herds of big brown elephants above the roofs. It was threshing in a day as much as the back-breaking flail did in a month. No more rubbing of aching joints and limbs. No more kinks in their spines. But standing erect now with wonder in their eyes and gratitude in their hearts, the old women looked upon the tractor, not as an Anti-Christ, but a Messiah. And as it went chugging along the road to the next village, they stood waving it good-by, "Good-by, *golubushka*, little dove!" "Come to us again!" "How sweet to lay our burdens upon the iron shoulders of the little child of Jesus!" "Little child of Lenin!" put in a young peasant reprovingly.

Finally, by collectivization, they sought to resolve the age-old conflict between city and village by bringing agriculture along with industry into the orbit of socialism. "We cannot for long," said Stalin, "base the Soviet power on two foundations: on large-scale unified socialist industry, and on our most divided small peasant farming." As America could not remain "half-slave and half free," the Soviet Union could not continue half-socialist, half-capitalist. With the aim of creating a homogeneous organism, it embarked on its most audacious enterprise: the complete socialization of the land, and the conversion of a hundred million individualistic property-minded peasants into collectivists and co-operators.

To accomplish this the Soviets had to overcome the deep-rooted conservatism and inertia of the peasants reflected in their saying, "As things were, things needs must be. As our fathers plowed, so plow we." They had to overcome the



sabotage of the *kulak* or prosperous farmer who was often the local shark, speculator and usurer, desperately clinging to his privileges. In tens of thousands they were uprooted and exiled to the lumber camps of the North, the construction jobs in Siberia. In this struggle the "red cock was set crowing"—that is, the torch was applied to the barns and hayricks of the collectives. Cattle were slaughtered; fields left unsown or unweeded; famine swept through many of the villages.

In the beginning of this campaign, in 1931, I accompanied three Senators—Barkley of Kentucky, Wheeler of Montana, and Cutting of New Mexico—into the villages. So rough were the roads that we were battered and pitched about like cargoes in a heavy sea, and our ramshackle-cars broke down. Under a broiling sun the Senators hauled them out of muckholes, pushed them up long hills, poured endless buckets of water into radiators leaking at every seam. So primitive were our lodgings that out of the wooden walls swarmed regiments of bed-bugs, assaulting the representatives of American capitalism with zest and fury. So far from the beaten track did we stray that the natives had never before seen an American or an automobile.

But in these remote places there was already a tractor and some of the new kolhozes—groups of farms merged into one large-scale farm and managed co-operatively. Side by side stood the new and the old ways of tillage. In one field the women reaping the grain with a sickle; in the next a harvester slicing it down in clean wide swathes. On one hand, the peasant with his wife and children painfully beating out the grain with flails; on the other, a collective thresher with a stream of grain pouring from its chute. A turn of the head, and from primitive methods and instruments little changed since the dawn of history, the eye leaped forward tens of centuries to the modern mechanized order of the collectives.

In the last analysis the collectives won out, not because

they were backed by the coercive power and propaganda of the state, formidable as they were, but because on their side were arrayed the forces of science and technique in league with nature itself. And because the peasants could see for themselves what a gang-plow or a combine could do for them. The case for the collectives can be stated in one sentence: Whereas under the old system in Russia it took 32 man-hours to produce a ton of grain, under the new it takes 1.7 hours.

In spite of this and many other advantages in favour of the new system, one million peasants on their own private individual farms still cling stubbornly to the ways of their fathers. They are, however, an almost negligible factor in the agrarian economy of the Soviet Union, tilling less than 1 per cent of its soil. All the rest has been brought into the new system of collectivization in its two main forms.

First, the 4,000 State Farms called *Sovhozes* engaged in raising grains and fibres; the breeding of horses, sheep or reindeer the cultivation of soy-beans, rubber-plants, medicinal herbs—oils of mint, anise and geranium. Like the big factories, these are owned and operated by the government, mostly under the Commissariat of Grain and Live Stock. On each a manager is appointed and everyone from doctor to tractorist, watchman, shepherd, and wolf-killer works for wages and is organized into a union. At the outset, carried away by the idea of bigness, some of these State farms embraced hundreds of thousands of acres. But often they proved unwieldy and unprofitable, and most of them were either split up into smaller units, converted into experimental stations or handed over in whole or in part to the *kolhozes*.

Far and away the biggest and most important sector of agriculture are the 250,000 *Kolhozes*, co-operative, self-governing associations of farmers. To them belong over a billion acres, four-fifths of all the arable and grazing land. Each is composed of from a dozen to a thousand households.

Their status is similar to that of the industrial co-operatives, jointly owned and run by their members to whom, after the deduction of certain taxes and levies, belong the fruits of their labour.

Supposing 130 peasants unite their separate holdings of about ten acres each to make a farm of 1,300 acres, the average size of a kolhoz today. To it as a corporate body is given the land "for ever," and it may not be reduced, sold, or rented. Besides this communal land, each member has an individual plot for his house, garden, orchard, cow, poultry, and beehives. As in an industrial co-operative, authority is vested in the "general meeting" of all the members, which elects a chairman, a board of managers and auditors. It confirms the plans for seeding, reaping, building, and swamp-draining; accepts or expels members; decides on the division of income in accordance with the rules laid down in the "model" constitution for kolhozes.

Some kolhozes are well-equipped with machinery, but most of them look to the government-owned-and-operated Machine-Tractor Stations for their gang-plows, combines, flaxpullers, potato-diggers, and big trucks. There are some 7,000 of these scattered throughout the country, each servicing a group of farms, not only with machines, but with technicians training the farmers how to drive them; accountants assisting in keeping the books and tallies; agronomists planning the rotation of crops, conservation of moisture, fertilizers.

All the work on the kolhoz is done by its members. They are divided into brigades of five to fifty, to each of which is allotted a specific task. One brigade may be assigned to a big grain field and to fix responsibility is charged with a section of land the season through. Another is given the construction and repair of buildings, bridges, and roads. Upon another devolves the care of the kolhoz herds—horses, oxen, or camels. Thus each man or woman, instead of being a jack-of-all-trades on an individual farm, becomes something

of a specialist, doing the work for which he has a particular training liking or ability.

One's income depends on the quality and quantity of the work performed reckoned in "work-days." Thus the binding of a certain number of sheaves counts as one "work-day"; the time of a first-class tractor driver for a day as two "work-days." For those running ahead of norms set by the kolhoz, there are bonuses in kind—a fifth of the suckling pigs above calculations; half the surplus baby chicks; a sixth of the extra eggs.

In casting up the accounts for the year and dividing the harvest, the first part goes to the State for taxes, usually in the form of deliveries of grain, flax, and meat at low fixed prices. Then the payment, also in kind, to the Machine-Tractor Station for the use of threshers, reapers, plows, and trucks. That leaves about two-thirds for the kolhoz. After setting aside seed and fodder for the coming year and for "improvements" like buying a blooded bull or building a new silo, the rest is divided among the members according to "work-days." A big family may thus receive a ton or more of grain as well as its quota of potatoes, meat, butter, and wool.

In addition to his share of the joint products of the kolhoz each member has, of course, all the income from his own garden, cows, poultry, rabbits, berries and bees—the amount depending on how well and how diligently he tends them. These together with its share from the general fund may be consumed by the family, sold in the many special markets or bartered with neighbours. Thus the kolhoz seeks to combine the benefits of social co-operation with the free play of individual initiative and enterprise.

On the whole it has won the allegiance of the people, converting some of its most bitter opponents into ardent supporters. But that does not mean in any way that all problems are solved. Human nature continues to function in the best-regulated kolhozes. Many still show evidences of

waste and mismanagement: Rats infesting the granaries. Neglect of farm animals in their obsession with machines. Members sparing their strength on the common fields in order to have more for their own individual ones. Too many conflicting orders from the centre. Too many in the offices pushing buttons about on the ancient wire and wooden abacus. Elders lamenting their lost prestige, unable or unwilling to adjust themselves to the new ways. Vexing problems, but minor alongside those already surmounted, and quite overshadowed by all the achievements of collectivization.

The cultivated area of the Soviets, thanks to the introduction of drought- and frost-resisting seeds and trees is reaching into the Arctic and down into the sandy wastes of Central Asia. The productivity of the soil has likewise increased 30 per cent. So has the yield per acre and the output per farm. From 311 rubles in 1932 the average cash income of the farmer rose to 982 in 1939, and was still on the way up. From 90 million tons in 1933—a crop that broke all records and turned the tide in favour of collectivization—the grain harvest rose to 142 million tons in 1940.

Gone for ever is the old, unprofitable, back-breaking tillage of the soil, releasing each year a million and a half men for industry. Gone is the constant dread of those famines and plagues which periodically decimated the village. Gone for the most part are the old superstitions that once darkened their minds. As centres of culture, the kolhozes are fast eliminating what Bernard Shaw called "the idiocy of village life." Like the cities, they, too, have their theatres and libraries, sport-fields and "circles" for science, music and dancing.

Greatest boon of all to the Soviet farmer is this new-found feeling of security—the assurance that his property cannot be mortgaged or lost through delinquent taxes; the knowledge that if hail or drought destroy his crops, if lightning or pestilence kill his cattle, he is covered by almost

every conceivable kind of insurance; the assurance of provision for disability or old age; of education and a chance in life for his children. With this has come a new sense of his importance. In place of the old mujik, cap in hand, bowing low before his master, is a new type standing erect, confident of his own worth and powers.

Just as the country was beginning to reap the benefits from this great revolution on the land, war broke loose. Declaring that food was as essential as munitions for the front, the government raised the required number of working days on the collectives to 150 a year, and made everyone from fourteen to fifty years of age available for work on the farms.

Contingents of new-trained women replacing the men mobilized from the farms are operating the tractors, reapers, and threshers. Thousands of kolхозes are increasing their own sown areas, and on top of that are planting "Acres of Friendships," the produce going to those whose houses have been burned and looted by the Nazis. Sometimes the homeless peasants from occupied regions bring their tractor with them.

The kolхозes also serve as asylums for the children orphaned by the war; and rest homes for soldiers convalescing from their wounds. Awaiting their return to the front, they, too, as far as their strength permits, join with the children and women and old men in the "battle for food" that is being waged unceasingly.

Despite all these exertions, the Soviets are facing a food shortage, if not an impending famine. The higher yields, the planting of 15 million acres of new land, doubling the plowing rate, do not compensate for the loss of 90 million acres to the Nazis—some of it in the most fertile soil, the good black earth of Kursk, the Caucasus, and the Ukraine.

But if the Soviets are not getting anything out of the Nazi-occupied regions the Germans are likewise getting little or nothing. This was another of Hitler's miscalculations! He counted on feeding his armies on Soviet food. He found, in-

stead, that most of it had been evacuated, the ripened grain fields set on fire, and the green ones trampled down by cattle. Abandoning hope of any free co-operation, the Nazis import German overseers to dragoon these people into forced labour on the farms, imposing drastic penalties for disobedience. Tens of thousands of rebelling men, women and children have been flogged, shot or hanged. But the slayings are not all on one side.

Often the infuriated farmers beat their German taskmasters to death with clubs and pitchforks, burn down their houses and flee to the woods. Others, simulating submission, practise sabotage, producing little, and hiding as much of that as they can—hutches of rabbits in the woods, pits dug for chickens, even tying the beaks of hens to keep them from cackling in the hide-outs. By devious ways, usually under cover of night, they carry their grain and meat and eggs to guerilla bands in the forest. Often these bands are fed by the very farms from which the Germans are vainly trying to extract food.

11. INDUSTRY GROWS UP AND GOES EAST*

Four months after the Nazis attacked the Soviets. Hitler complained that they never dreamed there were such reserves of material. Again in six months he announced that Germany would direct its main effort against "the immense and incredible supplies of ammunition, tanks and planes."

It is difficult to understand why he was so astounded. The phenomenal growth of industry was a well-recognized fact. The casual traveller looking out of the train window saw evidence of it. There were plenty of authenticated reports from specialists returning home after fulfilling contracts with the Soviets—among them many German engineers. And the Soviets, though they may not have told all about their industry, told a great deal.

In terms of capital investment, the *Gosplan* reported that during the First Five-Year Plan, 51 billion rubles were invested; during the Second Five-Year Plan, 114; during three years of the Third, 192 billion, making 357 billion in the aggregate of which the lion's share went to industry.

In terms of tons, rubles kilowatts, the Royal Institute of International Affairs gives the following production figures:

	1913		1940
Oil	9	(Million tons)	34
Coal	29		164
Cement	1		5
Steel	4		18
Sugar beets	10		21
Cotton	0.7		2
Machine tools	1	(Thousands)	48
Chemicals	0.5	(Billion rubles)	6
Electricity	2	(Billion kilowatt hrs.)	50
	119		

*Cf. *U.S.S.R. Speaks for Itself*, Vol. 1; Industry. The Socialist Literature Publishing Co., Agra.

As significant as the growth of industry is its distribution. To get some concept of this, instead of looking at figures, look at the map. Only it must be a new one. The old maps show the industrial centres in the extreme west—Leningrad, Moscow, and the Ukraine. Ninety per cent of all industry was concentrated in them, 500 miles from the frontiers. They had grown up in Tsarist days along with the railroads, close to pools of skilled labor, easy credit and easy markets. The great hinterland of Russia was treated as a colony, a source of raw material and cheap labour.

The Soviets reversed this policy for three reasons. First, they sought to develop the backward regions and peoples at the expense, if need be, of the richer and more advanced centres. Only through the development of their own resources and the benefits resulting therefrom could the many peoples be welded together into one union.

Second, they wished to locate industry as close as possible to the sources of raw material and cheap power. If cotton were grown in Uzbekistan, there it should be spun and not in Moscow. In addition to building the new enterprise, this entailed building at the same time new railroads and new cities and all the services required in such a drastic reorganization. Very costly, but in the long run it meant a more rounded and less wasteful economy.

Lastly, the location of industry should contribute to the defence of the country. The Soviets consciously planned for strong industrial bases on which to fall back in case of invasion strategically located beyond the reach of bombing planes. They wanted to erect in the East duplicate plants of every essential industry, in case factories should be destroyed. They wanted all regions develop local industries to provide for every-day needs and to be as self-sustaining as possible in case supplies should be cut off. In other words they were aiming for "total defence."

Before these aims of the relocation of industry could be realized, the Soviets had to know what the country contained. They had to make an inventory of the natural resources. Where were the metals? Where were the sources of power in coal, oil, and water? What about climate and soils? What were the densities of population? Did man-power exist near the resources or would they have to be imported?

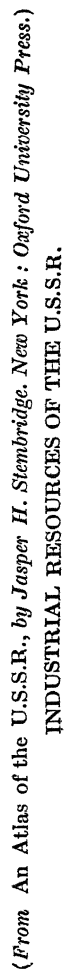
To the old Russia of woodsmen, peasants, and nomads, it was not essential to know these facts. But for the Soviets, with a program of complete industrialization, it was imperative to have ample data on which to base their plans. To this end the colossal outlay of funds for geological research—140 times greater than before the Revolution, and more than all the other European countries combined. The Academy of Science, the *Gosplan*, and various industrial institutes sent experts into the field. On glaciers and deserts, in forests and steeps, from the North Pole to the Pamirs gleamed the white tents and campfires of a hundred expeditions, engaged in wiping the uncharted white places from the map. As a result of these labours, in known reserves the Soviet Union stands first in the world in oil, iron, timber, platinum, lead, apatite. It stands second in coal, gold, manganese, aluminium, chromium, nickel, zinc. To these may be added rich finds of copper, mercury sulphur. Only 14 of the 92 chemical elements in Mendeliev's table were known to be available in Russia as late as 1914, and only 20 were actually used in Russian industry at that time. Today 80 are found and are in use.

In energy resources the Soviets stand first in "white coal," the power in flowing and falling waters. Their new plants extend from the River Niva, north of the Arctic Circle, to Armenia, where the River Zanga pours down from a lake a mile above the sea. Of coal the country has over a trillion tons. While the great Donbas in the Ukraine has fallen to the Nazis, fortunately coal is found in almost every impor-

tant region, the seams of the great fields of Kuznetsk and Karaganda often reaching to the depth of a six-story building,

In the centre of the present world struggle is oil. Essential as it is to all the nations to keep their tanks at the front and their planes in the sky, oil is even more essential to the Soviets. Without it, half a million tractors on the farms come to a halt and the people to hunger. In his famous speech calling for the wealth of the Ukraine, Siberia, and the Urals Hitler did not mention what his heart was most set on, and for which he is giving a million lives—the manganese of the Caucasus and the oil-fields of Baku, producing 65 per cent of the total Soviet output of oil. Tragic as may be its loss, it is not irreparable. Oil is produced in many places from the Pechora Basin in the North and the Vale of Fergana in the South, way out to the Island of Sakhalin in the Pacific. Most significant today is the chain of new fields east of the Volga—the “second Baku” running from Kuibyshev to Molotov (Perm), with perhaps the biggest deposits in the world. There the Soviets are intensively building new refineries and pipe lines as feeders to their new industrial region in the Urals. They are also storing reserves of aviation gasoline and Diesel oil in case of disaster to the Caucasus.

Counting the old and the new, there are six main industrial centres. First of the old centres is *Leningrad* with the largest and best-equipped port in the country. Its small shops turning out wagons and small arms are overshadowed now by mammoth works for making aluminium, turbines, cannons and tanks. Where Peter the Great built his wooden hips, the Soviets are now building cruisers, ice-breakers for the Arctic and steamers and barges for the rivers and inland canals. Through them now come raw materials, fuel and food for the city. Instead of big import from abroad—even British coal for the stoking of its furnaces—by developing local sources of supplies and power, it is now much more



(From An Atlas of the U.S.S.R., by Jasper H. Stenbridge. New York: Oxford University Press.)

independent and self-sufficient. With only one line laid down over the ice of Lake Ladoga, the city survived the gruelling siege in the winter of 1942—not however without the loss of perhaps a third of its 3 million inhabitants.

Similarly, the second old industrial centre of *Moscow*, had three of its eleven railways cut by the Nazis, but was able to carry on with the power drawn from its local coal and peat. The ancient capital was once protected by concentric rings of high walls of stone and oak, which are now converted into boulevards. But it has higher, stronger ramparts in rings of fire from its anti-aircraft guns. With these and its combat planes, according to British experts, it put up a better fight against the Nazi bombers than any city in Europe. This powerful aerial defence only reflects the industrial progress of the city. The shops that once made bells and swords and samovars have largely given way to huge plants making high-speed steels, generators, planes and locomotives. Its output is greater than all of old Russia before the Revolution. Once largely an administrative centre, "Mother Moscow" now sends out not only decrees and Commissars, but dynamos, looms and machine tools into the far corners of the Soviet land.

Last of the old industrial regions is the Ukraine—known to the world first of all for its Dnieper dam, both in its building and its blowing up. Impressive in itself, it was but one of many equally important enterprises. Along the banks of this once-raging Dnieper stretched a chain of giant combines for aluminium, magnesium, electric steel. Close to the iron ore of Kerch and Krivoi-Rog were big batteries of coke ovens, blast furnaces, and blooming-mills. Kharkov, hub of eight railways, was the metropolis of machine building. Out of acetylene, derived from the coal and lime of the Ukraine, a score of factories made synthetic rubber. Its famous Donbas was the main "coal-bin" of the Soviet Union; in its beet fields, the "sugar bowl" of the country; and in its wheatlands—a good share of the nation's "bread basket."

Most of this is now taken over by the Nazis. While a hard blow to the Soviets, it was not unexpected. They knew the Ukraine was extremely vulnerable and they had foreseen its possible capture by the enemy. They had even envisaged the capitulation of Leningrad and Moscow. That is why to compensate for such possible losses they sought as quickly as possible to shift production to safer regions in the East.

From these old centers came the bulk of the Industrial output. Competing with them were a number of new and lusty rivals. They grew up all over the land, from Murmansk with its large apatite and nepheline deposits which the Germans would like to annex, to the oil and metals of the Far East which the Japanese would like to possess.

In the South, however is a great, rich territory which no imperialists would try to take. Here protected by the massive ranges of the Tien Shan and the Pamirs lie the roling *Uzbek-Kazakh* steppe-lands with huge areas of fertile black-gray soil. Unfortunately, they are almost rainless. But there are heavy rains and snows and glaciers in the passes and plateaus above them, and they are now effecting the same magic transformation that the Sierras have in the once arid valleys and deserts of California.

Out of those immense fields of snow and ice, the rivers, channeled through irrigating canals upon the parched and thirsty soils, are turning them into immense fields of cotton, wheat and sugar beets, into fields of hemp, guayule rubber and mulberries for the feeding of silkworms. At the same time the swift, descending rivers are turning the wheels and spindles in a hundred mills and factories. From a chain of hydro-electric station comes power for the looms weaving Kirghiz wool into the famous rugs of Bokhara and the carpets of the Turcomans; for the tanneries curing the hides from the cattle ranges and the machines converting them into shoes and saddles; for the new meat-packing and fruit-processing plants. There are heavy industries, too, based on the new-found deposits of coal, oil, copper, sulphur, radium.

Augmented by the transfer of plants from the West, already the output of this region is far larger than that of Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan combined.

Of all the new regions the *Urals* and *Western Siberia* are most important from an economic-military standpoint. The last time I talked with Lenin in the spring of 1918, he said:

"Soon from west and south the White Armies will be driving in on Moscow. But never mind. We have the big, rich Urals to fall back on. There we can hang on for a long, long time."

While the Whites, like the Nazis, almost reached the gates of Moscow, they never captured it. So Lenin did not have to flee to the Urals. But in mind and feeling, he was often there. Pointing out on the map the region lying between Vologda and Tomsk, he would say:

"Look at it! An immense territory half savage and in some cases wholly savage. In that now wasted wilderness, a score of civilized states could be built up."

It was more than a decade before this vision began to take form and shape. It began in earnest around the twin-peaked Magnet Mountain that rises out of the barren plain near the frontier of Asia and Europe. It was discovered when a traveller noticed the needle of his compass, instead of pointing north, pointed to this mountain. It was an almost solid mass of magnetite—60 per cent pure iron.

In 1928 armies of workers with dynamite, bulldozers, steam shovels and dredges moved in on the place. They were joined by exiled kulaks, kirghiz nomads from the steppes, engineer from America. Hills were rent asunder; rivers turned from their course; caravans of camels, oxen and tractors struggled through mud and dust storms. Buildings, hurriedly thrown up at the wrong place, were torn down, to be erected again. Concrete froze as it poured. Typhus and malaria swept through the flimsy shacks and dugouts of the workers. Agents of the secret police watched out for spies

and wreckers. Engineers, cursing and toiling like mad, hurried by plane to Moscow to get relief from red tape and delays. Everywhere—noise, dirt, stench, confusion.

But steadily out of seeming chaos emerged the outlines of the huge metallurgical combine. Blast furnaces now light up the long winter night and stain the snow fields with their fumes. The howls of wolves are drowned by the roar of rolling mills. Long trains of ore-laden cars rumble off to the Kuzbas and Karaganda, bringing back coal to smelt the iron of Magnetogorsk. Out of the river, dammed into a five-mile lake, the water pours to cool the masses of molten metals. On the once barren, windswept plain now stands a city of 400,000 with its huge combine covering twenty-seven square miles. It turns out half as much steel as all Russia under the Tsars. Constantly expanding, it is slated to become the biggest in the world, with an annual output of 4,000,000 tons of coke, 4,500,000 tons of iron, 5,000,000 tons of steel.

This is what the Soviets call the "bread of industry," the raw material for cannon, tanks, armoured trains in the present; for bridges, rails, radios and telephones in the future—"the wings of steel by which we lift ourselves to the sun." Magnetogorsk is but one of a hundred new enterprises established in this mid-continent—based not only on metals, coal and oil, but on the virgin forests, the fisheries of the big Siberian rivers; the rolling wheat and cattle-grazing lands of the steppes. They constitute here a second Soviet State, self-sufficient and as large as Western Europe. On its western fringe the city of Sverdlovsk, where the Tsar was executed, is now the centre for the making of machines, turbines, and submarines in shops three miles long. Two thousand miles to the east is Novosibirsk, the Chicago of this new West, a second "Stacker-of-Wheat, Hog-Butcher, Forger-of-Metals for the World."

Between these two cities, each with over a half-million inhabitants, are scores of others growing up out of small towns and villages, or straight out of the wilderness—around the

coal of Kizel, the oil of Ishimbayev, the potash of Solikamsk, at Kurgan, Chusovaya, Kirovgrad.

Strange-looking and alien-sounding are their names to Western eyes and ears. Yet in the building of them, English, Canadians and, above all, Americans have had an important part. There were many German engineers in Russia, but few of them were allowed to go beyond the Urals. To America the Soviets turned for help in the building of their new industrial empire, and largely from our Mid-West which it resembled in so many ways.

There, on the same grand scale, was re-enacted the drama of the conquest of our West—the boom towns, railways thrust into the wilderness, the hardships and privations of the pioneers, their triumphs and joys. With such memories not yet faded from their minds, Americans could best grasp the spirit, the scope and grandeur of the great venture.

The story of it has been told in scores of novels, plays and epic poems by Soviet writers. Now they have a bigger, more exciting and heroic story to tell. For what happened in this region in the ten years prior to the outbreak of war in June, 1941, is quite dwarfed and overshadowed by what happened here in the ten months following.

On July 3rd, eleven days after the Nazi invasion, in his celebrated "scorched earth" speech, Stalin declared: "To the enemy must not be left a single engine, a single railway car, not a single pound of grain or a gallon of fuel."

That meant the evacuation of rolling stock, cattle, grain, everything usually deemed movable, and the dynamiting of mills and factories. That is what people in the outside world thought. And that is what the Soviets intended them—especially the Germans—to think. Only in October, 1941, when the economic experts came to the Three-Power Conference in Moscow was the full intent of Stalin's speech revealed.

They found that scores of plants in the Nazi-occupied regions, instead of being blown up, were in full operation. Uprooted from their foundations, and loaded onto trains

along with their workers, they had been shipped a thousand miles or more into the East.

While the Red Army slowly retreated before the advancing Nazis, keeping its forces intact, with the same skill the industrial army of the nation made a parallel retreat, keeping its forces and equipment intact. Night and day the trains moved East laden with the turbines of the Dnieper dam, the stamp mills, the forges and presses of Kerch, the textile looms of Mozhaisk.

For the evacuation of a single plant—the Kirov works on the Neva—thousands of cars were required. An armament works like Krupp or Skoda, it covered 400 acres, with 40,000 employees, 9 rolling mills, 15 open hearths and electric steel furnaces, 310 forges, 420 heating furnaces, 3,500 metal-working lathes. Most of this was loaded directly upon long strings of flat cars backed into the shops, and some days later was unloaded at its new home in the Urals.

The same feat was repeated with the giant tractor works of Kharkov, the farm implement plant of Rostov, the aircraft factories of Moscow and Taganrog. Along with the giant plants from the big centres were evacuated hundreds of others from smaller cities and towns. And accompanying them on the long trek into the East, went a million workers with their families, the engineers and directors, the technical schools with teachers and apprentices. The speed of their removal was equalled by the speed with which they were put into action again. In a few months, sometimes a few weeks, after arriving in their new homes, their output was as high—and in many cases actually higher—than in their original ones.

Some six hundred years ago there was another great exodus from the central plains of Russia into the East. In *The Flight of a Tatar Tribe*, De Quincey tells how the Mongol hordes on the Volga suddenly pulled up stakes and stampeded back to China, most of them perishing on the way. History records many similar migrations of peoples. But none quite so unique, so swift, so spectacular as this one in the autumn of

1941. To grasp its scope and significance, transfer the scene to America.

Imagine Nazi armies, already in control of the Atlantic seaboard, steadily pushing into our industrial Mid-West. To all centres is given the signal to move. Dismantle most of the big factories along the Ohio River and the Great Lakes, the plants of the Fisher Body in Cleveland, Wright Engine in Cincinnati, Martin Aircraft in Baltimore, the steel works of Pittsburgh and Youngstown. Add to them some hundreds of enterprises producing chemicals, rubber, textiles, shoes.

Assemble the plant personnel—engineers, technicians and workers—together with many of their families. Load all these people, mills and plants upon trains—for in Russia motor trucks are scarce and good roads scarcer. Then, over the same railway lines on which two million soldiers with guns and munitions are moving East, ship this huge aggregation of machinery and men into states as far west as Colorado and Kansas. Set up the enterprises anew, adjusting them to existing supplies of water, fuel and power, or finding new ones. Then, while most of the able-bodied men are drafted into the army, and half the women are toiling in the fields, get them going full blast, and in a short time run their output to their former level and, in many cases, beyond.

No wonder that evacuation of Soviet industry was hailed abroad as stupendous, almost incredible. Hard put to explain it, commentators said that Russians are always doing strange, inexplicable, mysterious things, and this was just one more of them. Without doubt it was a remarkable feat. A little investigation, however, reveals nothing very mysterious or incredible about it.

The flight into the East was not an improvisation, a sudden, last-minute, desperate measure. It was carefully planned and prepared for long years in advance—in many cases down to the last detail. For example, instead of imbedding machines, lathes and forges in concrete, they were bolted into

timbers. When the time came, they did not have to be torn away, but simply unbolted and lifted from their bases.

As removal from their old homes was thus expedited, so by similar ingenious devices was their re-establishment in their new ones. In some cases they had simply to move into new buildings awaiting them—the so-called “shadow plants” complete in everything but the machinery. When the machines from the old plants arrived at their destination, they had only to be lifted from the cars onto the foundations prepared for them. In many cases they actually went faster than in their old homes, thanks to better planning of new shops, the rationalizing of processes, the introduction of later models.

In the case of duplicate factories the area of its “double” in the Urals was expanded, and the two enterprises were merged into a single big unit. Other factories, like orphans, came to their journey’s end with no place to shelter them. Often in the trains that brought them were flat cars with building materials and lumber. With these, and the stone, lime and fire clay that abound in the Urals, a new structure was soon under way. Meantime, on the chosen site, often the machines were set up in the open air, and while belts whirled, forges blazed, trip hammers pounded, on either side rose the walls and roof that would protect them from the autumn rains and winter-snow.

And they rose quickly, in as many days or weeks as they took months in times of peace. In construction, as in most other fields, all previous records were broken, thanks to the mobilization of the best brains and energies available for this resettlement of industry in the East. The ablest engineers, architects and draftsmen in the country, along with Iofan, designer of the Palace of the Soviets, contributed their best efforts; the leading geologists and scientists for locating new resources, headed by the academician Fersman; the veteran transport workers, compelling the railways to double and triple the already dense traffic, directed by Kaganovich.

In the co-ordination of all these forces, spurred on to the utmost endeavour by the urgency of the situation, and their application to very carefully thought-out plans, lies the explanation of the success of the evacuation. But this, of course, does not explain it away. It remains a stupendous national achievement. To the United Nations a cause of marvel and rejoicing—to Hitler a source of bitter disappointment.

In Hitler's plans these Soviet mills, factories, arsenals, as in France, were slated to be a part of the war economy of the Reich. But just as they came within his grasp, either they blew up like the Dnieper Dam or they slipped through his fingers. Before the Nazis advancing across the land, one by one like gigantic grasshoppers they leaped up and took flight a thousand miles into the East. From this safe vantage ground, they at once set to work again, turning out projectiles, planes, and tanks—how much no outsider exactly knows.

Before the war, this new industrial region in the Urals and beyond accounted for about a sixth of the Soviet output—a fourth of its coal and iron. Now, augmented by the arrival of these evacuated plants, its output probably amounts to a third, a half, or even more. One thing, however, is certain. The complex of new plants and of workers will, for the most part, never return to their former homes in the West. Added to the old enterprises, and hundreds of new ones in the making, these new centres constitute a solid base for that great civilized state which Lenin, in his vision of twenty-five years ago, saw rising in this hinterland.

A mighty factor in the war, it will be equally powerful in the years following. In the event of a bad peace, it will continue to function as a colossal arsenal, backing the Soviets in the game of power politics. If it is a good peace, bringing security to all nations, shifting from weapons of war to the making of the implements of toil and trade, this new industrial empire will be a vital factor in building up a good life not only in the Soviets, but in all the lands of the East.

12. INDUSTRY—SELF-RUN AND STATE-RUN

Most of the 61,000 large-scale enterprises are ranged under and operated by 43 commissariats which make up the *Sovnarkom*, or Soviet cabinet. Some of these commissariats are subdivided into "administrations" which are just what the name implies. Thus, Timber has Administrations for Lumbering, Woodworking, Cellulose, etc. On these commissars and administrators, the Soviet "captains of industry," devolve tremendous powers and opportunities. They are in the position of proprietors of the land factories and resources under their control, or they may be compared to boards of directors but with a vastly large scope to their authority and activities. They outline general policy, apply for capital, fix prices and wage scales, decide crucial problems like the location of enterprises around a source of raw material or a centre of energy.

Administration for each industry is regional. Thus all the iron and steel plants of a certain geographical area are under one chief. Close contact between the Central Commissariat of Heavy Industry and this region is maintained by a system of "engineer dispatchers" who inspect the enterprises and return with first-hand reports to the central authorities. Finally, the commissars appoint the heads of several hundred trusts and combines.

The function of the Trust is to organize in the field the actual work of production. Uniting all enterprises of a similar kind, they are usually "horizontal" in structure. Pumping the crude oil from the ground through its own pipe lines to its own refineries, the Grozny Oil Trust converts it into gasoline and kerosene and delivers it to the filling stations and the

consumer. A number of plants are sometimes associated to form a "combine" which is usually "vertical." Utilizing the residues of one process as the raw material for another, the big Stalinogorsh Chemical Combine manufactures nitrates, fertilizers, ammonia, dye-stuffs, drugs, and ceramics. But there is no rigidity in these arrangements. From time to time old trusts are dissolved and new ones created. On the principle that "the best is that which works best." enterprises are transferred from one trust or combine to another. With the trend toward decentralization, others are handed over to the Commissariat of Local Industries.

While there is a great variety in forms of the trusts and combines, their functions are quite definite. They are responsible for all the properties transferred into their keeping, which gives them legal status and financial autonomy. They carry out the building programs of the planning bodies and relay back their own recommendations. They see to the purchase of raw materials and the sale of the finished goods, in some cases through their own stores. They make contracts with the labour unions as to wages, hours, and working conditions. They settle disputes arising between different enterprises in the same trust, carrying their own claims for damages and breaches of contract against other trusts into the regular courts. They establish the research institutes and schools for the training of technicians and foremen. Finally, they appoint the managers, more and more frequently promoting younger men from the factories.

The tasks of the manager of Soviet mine, mill, cannon-works, fishery, or cheese-factory are like those of men in similar positions in other countries. His job is to cut costs, reduce overhead, raise the output of labour, increase the quantity and quality of goods. Along with better goods he is supposed also to turn out better men—more resourceful, technically trained, and qualified to fill the posts in his own enterprise and in the hundreds of new ones opening throughout the country. With this in view, a big Soviet factory has

its schools, night "university" newspapers, crèches, clinics, insurance, and sport-fields. In the proper functioning of these institutions as well as the factory the Soviet director is directly concerned. But if his obligations are many and varied, so are the means for carrying them out. One of his aides is the Factory Committee, elected by all the workers in each enterprise to improve conditions, enforce discipline, and raise production. Another is the Communist "cell" or branch, to raise the morale of the workers, instill in them the idea that the factory "belongs to all," and hold it up to the plans. Representatives of these two bodies, together with the director, constitute the "red triangle" of factory control.

The aim of the director is to secure the fullest co-operation of these two powerful allies. That is the test of his ability and upon it depends the success or failure of the enterprise. While all three have definite and important places in the scheme, the chief responsibility in the last few years has been increasingly shifted to the director. In the final reckoning it is he who must answer for all that transpires. Consequently to him has been given great power, authority and prestige. With them, if he acquits himself creditably, go much the same honors and awards that are bestowed upon leading scientists, authors, and artists.

In the field of industry, alongside the chief enterprises owned and operated by the State, exists another system—the self-governing industries, about 80,000 in number. They go under the name of Producers' Co-operatives, Artels, or Collectives. Each is composed of from five to a hundred or more members; in a few cases the number runs up to five thousand. In them over 3 million persons are engaged in the making of all kinds of wares from pearl buttons to barges and boilers, from crude wooden wagon-wheels to exquisite laces and embroideries. They operate brick-yards, lime-kilns, glass-plants, distilleries, canneries, bakeries. They send semi-

finished goods to the State factories or take from them products to finish.

They render all kinds of services from house-building to tailoring, and the carrying of baggage at airports wharves, and depots. A chain of 7,500 repair shops mends books, shoes, samovars, sewing machines, and musical instruments. Half the total catch of fish comes from the Fishermen's Collectives and most of the furs from the Artels of Trappers and Hunters in Siberia. There are Artels of Leather-Tanners, Charcoal-Burners, Knitters and Weavers, and Toy Makers; Associations of Sculptors and Painters with their own ateliers, of Writers publishing their books on their own presses. Today, in an effort to make localities as independent as possible during the war, the Soviets are offering loans and tax exemption to any artel or producers' co-operative set up to develop local resources, the products and profits being retained in the community as an added incentive.

In distinction from the State industries, in the co-operative or artel, ownership of workshops and tools is vested in its members, and the management instead of being appointed from above is directly elected and controlled by them. In place of regular wages and salaries, the income derived from the sale of goods or services is divided among the members according to work performed. The annual output from these industrial producers' co-operatives, already amounting to some 18 billion rubles, is growing larger every year.

The artels and co-operatives of today are the outgrowth of the old *kustarni* or cottage trades existing in the Russian villages in pre-Revolutionary times. Millions of peasants, especially during the long winters, were engaged in turning out all sorts of wares amounting to a third of the national output.

Out of bluish-white walrus tusks and mammoth ivory dug from the frozen tundras, the natives of Archangel carve brooches, bracelets, goblets, and sets of chessmen in novel designs. Instead of knights, bishops, and kings, man and his allies—the dog and reindeer—are arrayed against their ene-

mies—the wolf, the wood-devil, and winter. Out of camel hair and the down of goats the women of Chkalov make large shawls, so fine and spider-web-like in texture that they can be drawn through a finger ring. From the forests about Gorkey on the Volga come millions of candlesticks, plates, spoons and table-ware of almost feathery lightness—the Khokhloma ware. Made of birch and linden, the leads and oil with which they are covered are transformed in kilns into glistening gold, silver, red, and green lacquers—durable and heat-resisting.

Best known to me is the Painting Artel of Palekh, which I saw at its very beginning. Palekh is a typical straw-thatched village 200 miles from Moscow and far from the railway. It was once a centre for making cheap ikons, painted images of the Virgin and saints. The annual sale of thousands had dropped down to almost nothing after the Revolution. I was staying in the village when Galikov, a peasant, returned from three years of war, carrying in his knapsack a book of reproductions of the Old Masters from Giotto to Raphael, snatched from a burning manor house in East Prussia. Laying the book on the long table, he would open it reverently, eyes gleaming and with enthusiasm in his voice, exclaiming, "Eh—what devils! I should like to paint like that!"

With brushes from the tip hairs of squirrel tails and a few colors, supplemented by the juice of barks and roots emulsified in egg yolk and *kvas*, he and others began painting on wood, metal, and finally on boxes of papier-mache. Coated with oils and put in the kitchen ovens along with the black bread and cabbage soup, they were baked twenty times and polished a hundred times.

Out of these experiments were evolved the Palekh lacquers of today—exquisite miniature paintings Byzantine in form Italian in coloring, Russian in feeling. They received the highest awards at the Paris art expositions and were acclaimed by connoisseurs as rivalling the old Japanese and Chinese lacquers. Stylized in form, and with a great deal of symbol-

ism, they depict hunting and harvest scenes, fairy tales and legends like the "Fire Bird," the "Fishermen and the Fish," poems of Nekrasov and Gorky, episodes out of the civil war like the "March of Chapayev and His Men," exploits of the heroes of the Arctic and the Stakhanov movement.

The original little group of seven pioneers has now grown into an artel of over a hundred. It has a large edifice housing the kilns, a common room with a huge samovar around which gather the members for debates, discussions, songs, and stories; an art school for the training of peasant youth, and studios in which the student apprentices work under the guidance of the older masters. In many ways this artel revives the system of the medieval guilds. After three years' study the apprentice goes before a committee of five "masters" and on the basis of work submitted may be elected to the coveted rank of master. The committee summons others before it to reprimand them for negligence or willfulness, censures even a master "for increasing his output at the expense of his art," for "a tendency to imitation in his scroll-work." Appeals against its decisions or any other dispute may be carried to the general meeting of the artel, to the regional council, or even to Moscow. But almost never have the rulings of the old masters been disputed.

Each month the finished lacquers are brought to a commission of three elected by the members to be classified as first, second, or third with corresponding remuneration. Paintings of exceptional merit are given special awards. But seldom do even the best masters receive over six hundred rubles a month. After certain taxes and levies, about a fourth of the net profits of the artel is set aside as reserve capital in the bank. The remainder goes to the upkeep of the new museum, "red corners," and nurseries, for the purchase of magazines and books; to loan funds for members building a house, buying a cow or bicycle; into excursions to Moscow museums and galleries and distant places like Armenia to study the old paintings so striking like their own.

Over all the activities of the co-operatives the control of the State is strictly limited. Great pains are taken to preserve the autonomy of each enterprise, allowing its members to manage their own affairs in their own way. This answers the nature and needs of those individuals to whom the regime or routine of the State factories is uncongenial. If one does not like that kind of life, he may join his fellows in one of these self-governing enterprises, determining their own rules and working conditions. Or, if he is such a sheer individualist that he prefers to go "on his own," there is nothing to prevent him. One million craftsmen in their homes are making articles out of waste metals and wood, leather, ivory, bone, and birchbark. But, with a growing socialist mentality and the obvious advantages of associated effort, they are rapidly uniting in artels and co-operatives.

13. THE MEN BEHIND THE MACHINES

While the Soviets were building their fast-growing industries, they had to find the people to run them. The one great source of labor power was the villages.

Hitherto the hundred million peasants of Russia have always been pictured as awkward, shambling creature of the soil incapable of ever becoming masters of the machine. This in face of the fact that Slave comprise fully a third of the mechanics in the great plants of Pittsburgh, Gary, Detroit! Nevertheless, this concept was widely held in the western world, and was especially fostered by the Germans. "The Russian is a good fellow," said Bismarck, "as long as he keeps his shirt outside his trousers!"

In other words, let the Russians remain a primitive agricultural people, serving as producers of raw material for the factories of Germany and a market for their goods. And anyhow, weren't they mechanically inept and stupid by nature, congenitally unfitted to build an industrial civilization? This, of course, was just another expression of Aryan-Nordic superiority. The only reason why the peasants could not at first operate machines was simply that they were not brought up with them.

Consequently, for a long time under the Soviets, as under the Tsar, the industrial output was appallingly low. As late as 1936 Ordjonikidze was telling the directors of heavy industries, "Don't boast, comrades! If you ever want to surpass America you must make a study of this America. At the present time, if you please, labor productivity over there is three times as high as in our country."

A chief cause of this was the influx into the factories of

over fifteen million newcomers from the steppes and villages. They had no predilection for work in itself. "Work is not a bear," says an old adage, "it won't run away to the forest." This attitude came in part from centuries of exploitation. Why work hard when so much of the fruits of their toil was taken by the landlords and tax-gatherers? It was due also to the long winters which enforced long periods of idleness, and to the ninety saint-days and fetes of the church in which the peasant considered it his duty to loaf and get drunk.

Of course, there were occasions when he did exert himself prodigiously, especially in plow-time and harvest. But factories call, not for sporadic, but for sustained effort all day long, all the year round. Accustomed to a go-as-you-please life, it irked the peasant to punch a time-clock and obey the screech of a whistle. Accustomed to the primitive ox-cart, the plow, and the sickle, it was difficult to adjust himself to the swift tempo, complexity, and precision of the machine. He had to learn to have the right tool in the right place at the right moment to keep pace with a never-stopping conveyor belt.

But however lacking were the peasants in knowledge, they were not lacking in curiosity. Like children, they wanted to find out what made the wheels go round, and often stalled them. They wanted to see how fast the engine would run, and smashed it. This was a costly process. It took a frightfully heavy toll in stoppage, breakage, spoilage to the great distress of American engineers acting as guides and instructors. But nevertheless the Russians did learn, and on the whole learn quickly. In the course of a decade more than fifteen million peasants and nomads were transformed into mechanics—competent ones, as the Anglo-American Commissions to Moscow heartily attest. They know now how to build these complicated instruments of modern industry, and they know how to run them.

The Nazi storm troopers, raked by machine-gun bullets from the Soviet dive-bombers, or cowering for days in dug-outs under the deadly accurate drum-fire of Soviet artillery

have no illusions about the "mechanical ineptness" of the Russians. A bad day for them when the Soviet peasants tucked their shirts inside their trousers and became mechanics.

One of the chief forces in shaping the villagers into mechanics has been the labor unions. As an organic part of the Soviet system the unions do not have to fight for "recognition." On the contrary all the influence of the State is exerted to get every worker into them. The Labor Code compels all enterprises to deal directly and solely with the unions. The best buildings from the old columned Hall of the Nobles in Moscow to the steel and glass structures in the new cities, are assigned to their use. The union card brings preference and privilege in the form of places in rest homes, entry into parks and clubs, free legal advice.

The result is the biggest organization of labor in the world. While it is not compulsory, almost nine-tenths of the workers are enrolled in the industrial unions of the Soviets. "One industry, one union." All the workers in one plant, from the gate-keeper and samovar-server to the technical staff, are in the same union. There are no craft unions or craft jurisdictional disputes. There is a union for Precision Instrument Enterprises, for Heavy Engineering Industry. Likewise, one union embraces all persons engaged in forestry and Rafting, another includes all workers on Fur and Poultry Farms, one for all cinema studios—and so on through 192 unions embracing some 25 million members.

The unions have a double function: one towards their members as a protective and fighting organization, the other in directing certain branches of government. In 1933 the Commissariat of Labor was abolished and most of its functions handed over to the unions. Now the unions draft the laws and regulations about working conditions. They appoint the inspectors who see that the measures for health and

safety are carried out. They enforce the contract between management and themselves. They administer a 10 billion ruble fund insuring themselves against accident, illness, and old age. Finally on the Planning Boards they help to determine what part of the national income shall come to them in wages. For example, the Third Five-Year Plan undertook to increase wages by 37 per cent. And in spite of the war it almost did it.

The plan also called for a 65 per cent rise in labor productivity, which was to provide much of the increased national income from which the higher wages were to come. For achieving this, the responsibility rests primarily upon the workers themselves. In effect the state says to them, "If you want more goods, make more." This is one of their main functions—finding ways to increase production, and in the Labor Code that is what they are called—Productive Unions.

At the same time the unions have not renounced their protective and fighting functions. They are not, as the critics contend, simply organs for regimenting worker so that they will passively carry out the policies of the State. They take an active and continuous part in the creation of those policies as well as in the execution of them. This was borne out by a conversation which I had in 1938 with a chauffeur who was driving me out to a factory. He was telling me about the activities of his union when I remarked:

"Abroad they often say that Soviet labor unions are simply adjuncts of the State. They don't really fight for or protect the interests of the workers."

"Maybe so," he replied, "but I know that they protect my interests all right. Six months ago we put in a demand for higher wages. But the management paid no attention to it. We asked them again and they sarcastically asked us where they were going to get the 30,000 extra rubles a month to pay for the raise. Our union then appointed me and two other chauffeurs to look into the business."

"Did you get anywhere?"

"Yes. We found there was a commission of five men to check up on the cars and garages of the plant. We showed how with a few changes that work could be done just as well by two men. We also showed how there could be a considerable saving in oil and gas. The management could not deny the facts, but they were a bunch of bureaucrats. One, I am sure, was a wrecker. We waited a week and when they did nothing, the union threatened to take the case up to the Central Committee of Unions. They got scared and gave in. Now, instead of 440 rubles, all the chauffeurs are getting 550 rubles a month. We got better wages, and the country got three extra, much-needed men to work elsewhere."

To settle disputes of this kind between the men and management, or conflicts between unions, there are various boards and commissions. If all negotiations fail, a strike is theoretically possible. But it almost never occurs because the workers know that they would be striking against themselves. The attitude is very much like that of America during war—when it is to everybody's advantage, labor and capital alike, to produce at top speed. In a thousand American war plants, labor-management committees have been set up to increase output and eliminate strikes.

In war or peace the Russian workers know that their welfare and income, in the last analysis, depend on the aggregate amount of wealth in the country, and on that alone. Therefore, their struggle in the main is not *for a greater share in production*, but *for a greater production in which to share*.

Hand in hand with efforts to increase production goes the task of raising the general level of the producers. Toward this end, at stated intervals the workers in each enterprise come together in a "general meeting" to consider all matters vital to their welfare. They debate, often very hotly, the pending collective agreement as to wages, piecework rates, rules, and holidays. They criticize freely the shortcomings of

everyone—from shop foreman to head director—pulling no punches.

To American television engineers who had often remarked, "There is no free speech in Russia," stopped me on the street one day to say, "We reverse our opinion. Last night at the general meeting in our factory, we listened to plenty of free speech—five hours of it. After the director spoke the workers turned loose on him. With questions and complaints, one after another sailed into him. When he couldn't explain, they shouted at him. When he could, they applauded. But they didn't let up on him for two hours. A worker in an American plant might think all these things that the Russians said. But he wouldn't say them. If he did, he would be thrown out on his ear."

These general union meetings are in effect the parliament of any enterprise or plant. In a big one it is composed of thousands of members. But even in a small one, it is too unwieldy to deal effectively with all the problems which are constantly arising. So it elects an executive body called the Factory Committee, composed of from three to fifty persons, its chief officers receiving their regular wages while serving.

This committee is the "voice of the workers" in all relations with management. It inducts the newcomer into the life of the plant and helps determine his job, his grading and his pay. It distributes to each man his "wage book" and collects the union dues—about 1 per cent of his earnings. In peacetime, one of its functions is to seek reduced hours and increased wages. Then the increase in wages keeps pace with the increase in the country's production. As fast as the workers put goods on the market, the money goes into their hands to take them off the market—the Soviet solution for the twin problems of unemployment and "overproduction". As the national income goes up, the budget goes up, and the share of the workers in wages goes up. Industrial workers in 1933 received 34 billion rubles. In 1937 they had 82 billion.

In 1940 it was 123 billion. True, the number of workers also rose, but wages rose faster. That is what the "fight" for wages means.

As to hours, in the present desperate battle for production, the usual six- or seven-hour day (depending upon the work) has been lengthened to eight for all categories except jobs dangerous to health. In most factories they are now working up to 11 hours and are paid time and a half for overtime. The six-day week has been changed to the seven-day with Sunday a holiday for everyone. Vacations have been cancelled for the duration, and extra pay given instead. Emergency Labor Decrees give management the right to transfer skilled workers and technicians to any part of the country where they may be needed; make it illegal to change jobs without permission; establish industrial conscription for both men and women over sixteen years of age. Similar measures are now being projected, wholly or in part, in England and America.

In wartime more than ever are the unions concerned with better housing, food, and health. Ordinarily a certain percentage of the profits of every firm goes to improve the housing conditions. The unions take part in the planning and handle these funds, often amounting to millions of rubles.

The matter of food is also of vital concern. Sustained labor demands a sustaining diet. Gone are the old lunch baskets and tin buckets. There are dining halls where workers receive their meals for cost price or less. The unions are organizing local dairy, poultry, pig, and rabbit farms, allocating to individuals garden plots and seeds for raising their own vegetables and berries.

Health and safety measures are also under the supervision of the unions. They see to the establishment of clinics, periodic physical examinations for everyone, gymnastic exercises during the work hours, rest homes, bathing beaches, skiing stations, resorts where over two million members spend their holidays and annual vacations. With holidays curtailed,

these places are now used for convalescing soldiers or evacuees. The unions have taken the lead in caring for families separated during evacuation, the adoption of orphans and for making the migration of workers into the East as speedy, efficient and painless as possible.

"Give 'em both barrels" is the slogan of a Soviet poster showing a Red Army man at a machine gun while the girl he leaves behind him has a firm hand on a riveting hammer. Into the gap left by mobilized men have come women, young boys and girls, old pensioners and villagers. Even in the case of men not called, the plant conversion, for example, from making tractors to tanks, has entailed the retraining of legions of workers. This emergency job of education has fallen to the unions. They have added to the usual elaborate network of schools linked up with industry a whole array of new courses. In order to speed up training, the new operators work beside old ones and learn while working. There are after-hour courses in which the foreman is the "lecturer" and the chief engineer the "principal." Those already employed in a plant are urged to learn some other process besides their own and are nicknamed, "Jack-of-two-trades." Or what is even more valuable, they learn how to repair and maintain the machine on which they work—be it locomotive or typewriter—thus really becoming masters of the machines.

On top of their other functions, the Soviet unions are the biggest social insurance company in the world. Before this war various kinds of insurance in the form of direct money benefits or services added some 20 per cent to regular wages and was borne entirely by the employer. The union administered this security system through 250,000 offices in the mills, factories, and State farms thus giving aid at the time and the place where it was most needed.

So comprehensive was the system that it protected the worker and his dependents against the ordinary exigencies of life from the cradle to the grave. Indeed, while he was

still in his mother's womb, it concerned itself with his well-being. With the watchwords, "Every child has the right to be well born," it gave his mother—if she worked in office or factory—35 days off with full pay before delivery and 28 days afterwards. It furnished him a baby's layette, a nine months' allowance for extra milk and clothing, and a creche with nurses to tend him part of the day. It helped to support the parks and summer camps for him to play in, the dining rooms to lunch in the schools from kindergarten to technical college to study in; and, if he showed talent, granted him a monthly stipend or scholarship.

From the first day he entered the office, factory, or mine as an apprentice, through maturity and old age, some provision was made for almost every contingency. If he fell ill or was injured, he received free treatment with part or full wages from the moment of disability until he got back to his job. If he was quarantined or must stay home to tend a sick wife or child, he was paid for it. If he needed serious, prolonged care, he might be sent to one of the 500 rest and convalescent homes with free transportation to and fro. If he was only run-down or ailing, after the day's work he might go to a "night sanitarium" for proper diet, bath, bed and breakfast—until he was up to the mark again. If he was transferred to a far-away job or lost time in a labor dispute, he got paid for that. If he lost an eye or a limb, he received free, artificial ones and an invalid's pension.

An old-age pension of half to two-thirds his regular wages came to him at 60, if he had worked for 25 years it came to him at 50 if he was engaged in an unhealthy, underground, or hazardous trade. For women, the retiring age was 55 after 20 years' service. When he died, he was assured of a decent burial with funeral expenses taken care of. And he did not have to worry about the fate of his family and needy survivors, for the insurance benefits were extended to them. The amount of benefits depended largely on one's service-record—where, how long and how well he had worked. Most favor-

ed were Stakhanovites and veterans of labor, on the principle that those who contributed most to the upbuilding of the country deserved most. At the same time, the actual needs of the recipients were taken into account. As the needs of the dependents of the breadwinner are the same whether he dies or disappears, in either case they were pensioned. As the slightly disabled could continue work or be retrained in another trade, they received a pension of a third, a half, or two-thirds their former income. The totally disabled, the blind, paralyzed, bedridden, who required a nurse or attendant, got 100 per cent. Because they needed more, they received more. But this principle did not apply to those whose disabilities were brought on by drunkenness.

In most cases, despite the colossal size of insurance funds in the aggregate, the benefits paid directly to any one individual were far from munificent. And they will probably be less so after the war. For the war has destroyed an enormous amount of the wealth of the country. At the same time it has created a million or more invalids and cripples to be cared for. That is a new and heavy load for the State and insurance funds to carry. But the principle of social security has been firmly established in Russia. The economic set-up doing away with unemployment delivers men and women from the fear of being jobless and moneyless. Insurance against almost every hazard and mishap liberates them from the haunting fear and dread of want in the future.

14. WHAT ARE THE INCENTIVES TO WORK ?

With their country invaded, people will work as they fight—from sheer sense for self-preservation. Danger acts as a spur and stimulus. But in peacetime, what are the motives impelling a Soviet citizen to exert himself ?

The basic incentive, in Russia as elsewhere, is to get a living. Article 12 of the Constitution reads : “ In the U.S.S.R. work is the duty of every able-bodied citizen, according to the principle ‘He who does not work, neither shall he eat.’ ” The kind of living one gets depends on how hard and well one works. The diligent farmer gets more than the easy-going; the skilled mechanic more than the pick-and-shovel laborer; the fast bricklayer more than the slow one; the talented author more than the ungifted one. In most enterprises the scale runs from 200 to 800 rubles a month—still higher for foremen, managers, and directors. Does not this violate the socialist doctrine of equality of income ?

There is no such doctrine, says Stalin. Under full-fledged Communism with its ideal, “From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs,” there may be something like that equality of income which Bernard Shaw insists upon. Certainly there is none now. The country wants goods, goods, and still more goods ! Therefore it offers the greater rewards to those who produce the most and the best.

“We shall pay fifty thousand rubles to a specialist,” said Lenin, “if we can gain thereby.” Prizes and premiums for suggestions and inventions provide an incentive to work intelligently and creatively. Payment by piece-work provides the stimulus to work intensively. Bonuses for good work pro-

vide a similar stimulus to day workers. If a man does five days' work in four, he gets paid for five.

Even during the stress of war, these practices are maintained. Wages have not been frozen. There is extra pay for overtime, and the "200 Percenters" who double their usual output, get double their usual rate. Wages for crews running their trains up to the fighting front, through military zones, are increased a third, with an additional 10 per cent in winter. Likewise for those who can make their engines operate on wood, lignite, or other substitute for coal. And as with civilians, so with soldiers. Those regiments whose exploits against the Nazis have won them the title of Guardsmen receive double the regular rate of pay.

A second incentive to work is the craving for place and power. To some men, mastery over one's fellows is the supreme satisfaction of life. They like to sit in the seats of the mighty, to make important decisions, to give orders, to control the destinies of others. The Revolution has not exorcised these desires from the hearts of everybody. Calvin B Hoover goes so far as to say, "The energy in the capitalist world which find expression in the struggle for wealth, for social position, and for the comforts of life, in Soviet Russia is canalized into the struggle for power." But this is an overstatement. The Soviet *mores* are all against the aggressive, ruthless careerist and climber. As vehemently as they condemn the greed for riches, they condemn the lust for power. The party comes down with heavy hand on anyone exploiting his position for his own gain or glory. The public will not long tolerate the official who "commissars it" over them and are quick to humble him in the press and the "purgings."

A third and growing incentive to action is the desire for approval and respect of one's fellows. Enthusiastically the Soviet State and people pay tribute to those who perform feats of strength and valor. Upon them it bestows all sorts of honors and decorations. The highest is the *Order of Lenin*, granted among others to the indefatigable George McDowell

for showing the Russian how the Americans grew wheat, and to the two young Kansans who helped rescue the *Chel-yushkin* castaways from an ice-floe in the Arctic. Among the 25 pilots honored by the *Order of the Red Banner* at the end of the first year of war was Colonel Vasily Stalin, younger son of the Premier. For scientists, musicians, writers—these “engineers of the mind and spirit,” as Stalin calls them—there are corresponding awards and decorations: *Peoples Artist*, *Honored Artist*, etc. To these long lists the *Order of the Patriotic War* was added in 1941. Then for officers distinguishing themselves by feats of skill or valor were instituted three new decorations in the name of old Russia’s military heroes, Alexander Nevsky, Suvorov, and Kutuzov.

These awards for high achievement are not unique. Other countries likewise pay their honors to the gifted, the inventive, the daring—if not on the same grand scale. The unique factor is the extent to which the Soviet Union lavishes honors on those who serve well in the more humble and prosaic ways of life. With the slogan, “Let the nation know its heroes of toil,” it broadcasts the names of the leading metalists, miners, weavers, oil-drillers. For managers and foremen in factories operating ahead of their quota there is the *Red Banner of Labor*. A big marble plaque in Moscow emblazons the names of the best collective farmers. An avenue of bronze statues glorifies the best Stakhanovites in the country. And if one cannot achieve that distinction, he may aspire to be a *Hero of Toil*. Or if that is beyond his strength or skill, he may at least see himself posted on the *Red Board of Honor* which hangs in every shop.

Man will strive for the means that bring him renown in his community. In primitive society it may be scalps. In capitalist society, money. In Soviet society, it is increasingly public recognition and decorations. The Soviets have not changed this old incentive to action—the desire to be known as men of skill, prowess, and ability. But they have changed

the symbols thereof, greatly increased their numbers, and made the winning of them possible to the masses.

To these old ambitions, the Soviets have added a new, more distinctive incentive in the feeling of ownership. Though the capitalist world attempts to enlist the interest of workers by giving them a share in the profits, in the Soviet world, *all* the profits, in the last analysis, go to the workers, and to them only. None of the surplus is diverted into the pockets of private owners to support an upper class in luxury or idleness. All of it goes into the public pool, returning to the community in the form of more schools, parks, rest-homes, theatres—or it is used for the construction of tanks, arsenals, and planes for their defence.

Knowing that every value he creates ultimately redounds to himself, his neighbor and his country, the Soviet worker is spurred to greater effort, and his attitude toward a faster worker is changed from suspicion to trust. Instead of regarding him as the bosses' fool or knave for working himself and his fellows out of a job, he respects him for adding to the common fund.

So important was this consciousness of ownership that Stalin, in his talk to the American Labor Delegation, placed it first in the list of incentives. All workers, of course, do not have it. It is particularly lacking in the newcomer from the village. He enters the factory with the individualistic idea of "each man for himself," "grab the most and give the least." But gradually a change is wrought in his attitude. He discovers that in working for himself he is necessarily working for others. He finds that the factory is not an alien thing aloof and a part from his life. Constantly he is told that it is *his* shop, *his* factory. Slowly the idea lays hold of him. He begins to identify himself with it. "The most astounding feature of industrial life under the Soviet," says the American engineer Rukeyser, "was the fanatical pride of all workers from the head-director down to the lowliest mop. The system had indeed made it their plant."

From that point, the social horizons may easily widen out to *their* industry, to *their* country, to *their* fellow workers throughout the world. Thus a new zest and meaning is imparted to life. No longer is the laborer merely toiling for a place in the sun, but to make the sun shine on all. He is now a part of something vastly bigger than himself. This merges into and is a part of that motive already stressed in the first chapter—the sense of being engaged in a great adventure—the building of the good society of the future.

Which of these various incentives is dominant in any individual depends upon the individual. In most persons they are all present in varying degrees. Certainly in any big Soviet enterprise one can see them all in operation. For instance, the great dam on the Dnieper—that first robust but short-lived child of the Five-Year Plans—now blown up to prevent its falling into Nazi hands.

During its construction, the regular army of engineers, foremen, drillers, received stated wages and salaries. Alongside of them toiled another great army of volunteers—tens of thousands of students, teachers, typists, doctors, gave up their vacations to help. The workers on the right bank challenged the left bank as to who could pour the most concrete. Flags and lights signalled the progress of the competing sides—a trophy passing each day to the victor, hailed by songs and cheering. At last the day of national rejoicing, as the water was sluiced into the nine great turbines extracting the power of 810,000 horses from the once-raging rapids.

For the purchase of those turbines from America millions of people had gone hungry or on short rations. A peasant on first seeing the mammoth structure exclaimed, "Now I know why for five years I couldn't buy a new overcoat or boots for my family. They all went into the dam." In his eyes, however, shone the pride of achievement. In the great enterprise he, too, like the construction workers, had contributed; he, too, had his small part. And to that was added the pride of pos-

session. Peasants, workers, all the people of the nation were joint owners together.

As in the building of the dam, so in its destruction this social ownership played a part. As the Nazis came near, no private interests, as in France, brought pressure on the government to save the property. The sole consideration was the best interests of the country. That demanded the blowing up of the dam, and straightway they blew it ! Not, however, before they had uprooted the generators and carted them across the river under enemy fire. Now evacuated into the East, they are humming again making the weapons to win back their place on the river.

So much for incentives at the present. But what about the future of which the Soviets are always talking ? All these old and new motives—gaining a living, power and honor, the sense of ownership, working for the common good—will continue to play their roles. A greater role perhaps will be played by the joy people have in self-expression, sheer pleasure in the exercise of muscles and brain. "They will paint for an age at a sitting and never get tired at all." That is true of some even now. What is already manifest in a few, the Soviets maintain, is potential in all. Once humanity is liberated from concern over the necessities of life, then, in the words of Engels, "work will become the first necessity of being." Then the tremendous capacities, long latent in mankind, will unfold in ways undreamed.

15. WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM ?

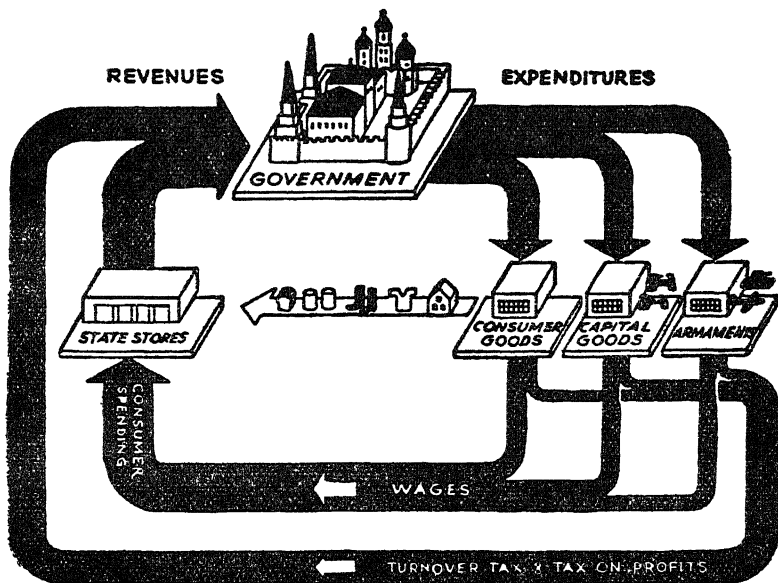
This is a war of armies, a war of production, a war of propaganda, and still another war. It is carried on by accountants, statisticians, and economists. Governments call for more and more money, and the bankers, for the most part, have to produce it. Incredible billions are needed and created. Our public is bewildered and alarmed. How can these astronomical debts ever be paid ? Is this a revolution ? With a war debt passing the 200 billion mark are we in a tailspin toward bankruptcy ?

In a topsy-turvy world it may be reassuring to look at the very worst that can happen and see what it's like. When people say, "Who will pay the taxes when almost everyone is a soldier or working for the government? What is going to become of productive enterprise ? What if our expenses grow as big as our national income ?" they express the "worst" as they see it.

That "worst" has taken place in Russia. There nearly everybody is working for the government. There the annual budget is over 200 billion rubles—43 billion dollars at the official rate of exchange. The expenses of the State nearly equal the total national income. But life goes on. Taxes are still collected. Enterprise make profits. There are still banks—some 50,000 of them. The Russians are not worrying. They are not clutching their heads over "deficit spending." Theirs is a different system.

In a general way the ruble flow in the Russian financial system follows the same channels as the dollar flow in ours. In both countries, banks cash checks, float loans for the government, grant credit. On the surface both are very much

THE FLOW OF MONEY IN THE U.S.S.R.



alike. But the objective of the Soviet economy is different. The Soviet's aim is to build and produce for use. The financial system has been designed to serve this purpose and is subservient to it. During our depression in the 'thirties building stopped because our money flow got out of order. While 15 million men in the United States were unemployed the Soviets were crying out for more workers and have been ever since !

To begin with, their money system is secured by precious metals largely because the outside world uses gold as a standard of value. Actually the quantity of money issued bears a closer relationship to the goods in circulation than to the reserves of silver and gold. It is a managed currency. When Lenin took over the banks in 1917 it was to control the issue of credit by the State. Thereafter credit was created to get

men and resources together—to build and produce. The three Five-Year Plans did this. Credit went to increase the production of capital goods. The more and faster the Russians built, the higher the national income climbed and with it to a certain extent climbed the standard of living.

The rapid expansion might have led to inflation had they not rationed the necessities and fixed price. The expansion was registered, as it is today in wartime America, in a shortage of labor and commodities. But when the new industries began to turn out goods that people could buy with the extra rubles in their pockets and the government withdrew several billion rubles from circulation, there was established better relationship between the money in circulation and the goods produced.

"How can it possibly be stated," said Stalin, "that our currency represents no value? Is it not a fact that with it we built Magnetostroy and Dneprostroy, the Stalingrad and the Kharkov works, thousands of State farms, hundreds of thousands of collective farms? What determined the stability of Soviet currency? Of course not simply the gold reserves, but the tremendous stocks of commodities in the hands of the State marketed at fixed prices. Who can deny that such a backing, which exists only in the U.S.S.R. constitutes a more genuine security than any reserves of gold?"

To repeat, the aim of the Soviets is to build and produce. Men and materials take precedence over money. The banks and credit serve this purpose, and the budget records the process on a national scale and shows the redistribution of funds going on each year.

Biggest of all big things in the Soviet Union is the budget. It includes not only the cost of the army, courts, schools, and State apparatus, as do those of other countries. But where they leave off it begins. It records how the income from all State-owned properties is accumulated, how it is being expended and why. Its major task is to provide the capital for a colossal, fast-growing economy. It must find the means to

bring thousands of infant industries into being, to nurture hundreds of others to full maturity and be ready to exploit new processes for either war or peace. To pass from figures of speech to actual figures, in addition to spending, in 1941, 143 billions for the current expenses of the country, the Commissar of Finance had the task of finding 72 billions to invest in new transport, industry and farming.

Each year the Soviet Government raises some such sum, increasing as the national income increases. In doing this it ends the old debate as to whether capital could be accumulated in a socialist state. Its opponents said it would not, could not, be done. Only under capitalism, they insisted, out of a surplus in the hands of individuals and corporations, could come the wealth to be used in making new wealth. In a socialist society people would not save, as they would refuse to stint themselves now in order to live more abundantly later. They would not emulate the planful bee, but the care-free butterfly, preferring to enjoy the clothes and food and drink of the present rather than build up the machines for producing more of these things in the future.

To these contentions the Soviet economy is a final and effective refutation. The budget shows that each year under Socialism about a third of the national income has been saved. This has been done in an impoverished country by a naturally spendthrift people, consenting to forgo the luxuries and comforts of life and often its very necessities. "To build blast-furnaces, we have gone without boots and butter." "To put belts on machines, we have tightened our own belts."

Indeed, to make the primary accumulation of capital without aid from abroad, this sacrifice was necessary. But there is a further distinction. It is the way some of this capital is invested that distinguishes Soviet book-keeping. A large part of the yearly sums going into new production, according to the Plan, appears in the budget as a subsidy or non-repayable grant to new industry and agriculture. It is given outright,

"plowed back into the nation's business." It is the national surplus being spent for the common good.

By doing it in this way, instead of by the device of bond and stock issues, the annual sums invested for railways, rolling mills, airplanes, and oil fields get into circulation and keep men at work without becoming a huge private debt owed to some person or class. In other words, expanding productive enterprises does not mean simultaneously building a vast debt structure that may later interrupt production as it does elsewhere. Capital in the Soviet Union does not lie idle in the banks, is not exported to foreign countries for a high return, nor does it get into the hands of a small powerful private group. It is this control of credit in the Soviet set-up which accounts for much of the success in solving unemployment, eliminating cycles of depression, and steadily raising the standard of living.

How does the Soviet accumulate this capital? By what device does it provide for a budget of over 200 billion rubles—steadily growing each year?

The great bulk of the revenue, about 75 per cent, is derived from the state-owned industries and trade. It comes mainly from, first, the *Turnover Tax*, which is a make-up on the cost of production; and secondly, a *Tax on the Profits* of State enterprises. *Insurance Premiums* are also paid to the government by farms and enterprises for employees, buildings, crops.

The Turnover Tax, as distinguished from our sales tax, collected directly from the consumer, is collected at the point where the goods are made. Beginning at one-half of 1 per cent on basic products such as coal and iron, the rates rise to 13 per cent on articles such as sickles and toys, to 40 per cent on sausage and soap. These are doubled on luxury articles like cigarettes and playing cards; and as a deterrent to the use of alcohol, 83 per cent is levied on vodka.

After handing over these large sums from the Turnover Tax, most State enterprises still show a surplus. Who gets this? In theory, all these profits, to belong to the State, as

it is the sole owner. It elects, however, to take only a share of the profits of each concern, ranging from 10 to 80 per cent. The rest is used by the individual enterprise for future expansion and housing, for clubs and stadiums, for bonuses and prizes to the managing staff and workers, acting thus as a stimulus to efficiency.

From direct taxes the revenues are relatively small. The *Agricultural Tax* consists of a levy of between 4 and 8 per cent on the income from the sale of products of the farms. An *Income Tax* is collected from persons earning more than 150 rubles a month. It takes 3 per cent of incomes over 500 rubles a month, deducted monthly, and increases with the increase of income. After the Nazi invasion, all income taxes were doubled. The *Inheritance Tax* is steeply graduated, but there is no actual limitation on the amount of property which can be inherited. In England death duties take 65 per cent of all fortunes over 2 million pounds; the Soviet takes 90 per cent over half a million rubles, *Mass Loans*, designed to suck up surplus purchasing power, bring in about 10 billion a year. These annual loans are floated in a win-the-war spirit. Vivid posters of the long-bayoneted Red Army guarding arrays of smoke-belching mills, summon the workers to subscribe at least a month's wages paid in instalments.

Usually they are oversubscribed; the last record-breaking Ten Billion War Loan of 1942 went over the top in two days with an extra two billion to spare. So strong is the pressure to buy these bonds, assert foreign critics, that subscription amounts to compulsion. This is hardly true. There are other reasons for the popularity of these securities. They bear interest at about 4 per cent. They are tax free, may be borrowed upon up to 30 per cent of their value and are redeemable on demand in case of dire need, such as fire or prolonged illness. They appeal to the old gambling spirit of the Russians, with lottery features—an option of taking larger winnings in place of interest as a part of some issues. On stated occasions public drawings are held in the chief cities,

attended by great crowds, to hear the calling of the lucky numbers as they are drawn from the revolving drums.

The question arises, "Will not this interest on bonds and savings create a new class of rentiers and coupon-clippers?" In rejoinder the Soviets point out that in the last issue some 60 million people subscribed, among whom large holders can hardly be more than a handful. Also, the whole Soviet psychology is against the acquisition of enough wealth to live without working. So much so, that the winners of big prizes in the lotteries often hand over to libraries, orphanages, and the Defense Fund a good part of their takings.

With a stamp tax and a few small items of export and import duties, collected from enterprises, the revenue is accounted for. The striking feature of the Soviet budget is that its revenue exceeds its expenditures. Always a billion or so on the solvent side, the budget of the Reds is not in the red.

How is the budget spent? Being the great accounting sheet of the nation by which the income is accumulated and redistributed, much of the Soviets' economic strategy can be seen through its disbursements. It directs money to the points where it is most needed. Thus, in the Five-Year Plans, heavy industry was nurtured on the tribute taken from light industries. If the quick development of an air fleet, a Northern sea route, a rubber plantation is deemed imperative, then into these channels the necessary funds are diverted. The Russians have repeatedly and ruthlessly scrapped airplane models to get the fastest and the best.

Out of a total of 216 billion rubles in the 1941 budget, 33 per cent went to capital construction in industry, agriculture and transport; for social and cultural services, such as education, health, science, 22 per cent; for defense, 33 per cent; and for other items, such as government, police, courts, banks, social security reserves, pensions, and emergency funds, 12 per cent.

The war has wrenched everything out of its natural proportion. In 1933 the appropriation for the Soviet armed

forces was one billion rubles. In 1941 it reached 70 billion a seventy-fold increase in less than ten years. In the United States military appropriations have rocketed from less than half a billion dollars in 1939 to some 60 billion for 1943, a more than hundred-fold increase in less than five years.

YEAR	ANNUAL	ARMY
	SOVIET BUDGET (<i>In billion rubles</i>)	APPROPRIATION (<i>In billion rubles</i>)
1931	19	—1
1932	29	—1
1933 (Year Hitler came to power)	38	1
1934	49	5
1935	67	8
1936	83	14
1937	96	22
1938	127	34
1939 (Year of German- Soviet Pact)	156	40
1940	183	57
1941	216	70

But for the growth of the Soviet national income and revenue each year, this increase in military appropriation would have been impossible. As it was, the military drain which finally took a third of the revenue along with the unheard of rate of capital expansion which took, roughly, another third, put a severe brake upon the rise in Soviet living standards.

If the budget shows how the national revenue is redistributed, it is the banks that really do the job. There are five specialized banks, each with a wide net work of branches, and each functioning for a different segment of Soviet economy. They do not trade in money, seeking the most profitable loans, but carry out the State policy on credit—both long and short term. No banks can place mortgages on real estate, as all land is nationalized. Their clients are practically all agencies or enterprises rather than individuals. They settle accounts between combines, collectives, and co-operative

without resorting to legal tender, by a system of debit and credit entries. When a tractor plant buys a million rubles of steel, that sum is deducted from its account and added to that of the steel combine. This practice is much like the use of checks in America and through it more than 90 per cent of the transactions are effected.

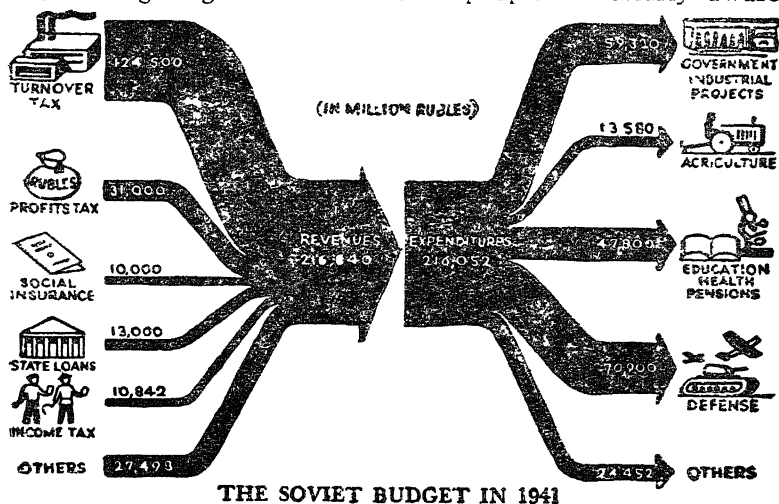
Most important nerve center of the financial system, and the only agency granting short-term credit, is the State Bank, *Gosbank*, with some 3200 branches. It is the bank of issue, printing the paper money and minting the coins, about half a billion of silver, copper and bronze. It floats government loans. It holds the reserves of precious metals and foreign currencies. In its vaults are the celebrated crown jewels, displayed on special occasions to the delight of visitors. It receives the taxes and other revenue through its branches and credit organs. In the past, managers, relying on the bounties of the State, have come to it for funds to make up all arrears. Now the Bank holds them to strict accounting, granting short-term credit only as they live up to their contracts and as their use is accompanied by the scheduled production and delivery of goods. If the goods are not forthcoming, if the credits are used for other purposes than that for which they were allotted, further large advances are stopped while a thorough investigation is made. In this way an extra and continuous check-up on the functioning of every enterprise is carried on.

The funnels through which pass the allocations from the budget are the long-term credit banks—four in number. Chief of these is the *Prombank*, which advances more money to new industries and electrification than any bank in the world. Some goes as loans for as long as forty years; some as subventions—the non-repayable, non-interest-bearing subsidies, referred to above. In return, the *Prombank* in behalf of the State receives a percentage of the profits of each enterprise, holds on deposit the funds for depreciation, gets interest on long-term loans used for extension and machinery. This bank also has the right of supervision and inspection. To do

this effectively, it opens branches on the big construction jobs. It sets up book-keeping for the enterprises, audits their accounts, prevents overstaffing, and like the State Bank, it makes their long-term credits and subsidies depend on how they keep up to the mark set by the Plan. In their own special fields the Banks of Agriculture, Municipal Economy and Housing, Commerce and Foreign Trade, perform the same function in much the same way.

There are also savings banks with 17 million individual accounts. Even though the worker is insured against illness, accidents, and old age, he may want to lay by something extra for a rainy day or a holiday. The State, too, pressed for funds for expanding industry and now for the war, wants every kopeck it can lay hands upon. It offers several inducements, beginning with 3 per cent interest, and makes deposits easy by opening branches in schools, villages, mills, and reading rooms.

Production is what the Soviets want—production of goods. The budget, the banks, and credit have been shaped to this end. In fighting the war the Soviet people are clearly aware



what war is costing them and how they are paying for it. The materials which they blow to pieces in tanks and shells, nothing can retrieve. They are gone for ever. And the human energy which produced these weapons is spent beyond recall. This labor and these resources are the bitter coin with which they meet the bill of the war. But there is no great piling up of debt. They pay for the war as they wage it—as they labor and waste their substance—and they know it.

But they also know that once the war is over, they can take up again the real task of rebuilding their country and they will not be deterred by "scarcity reckoning"—or, as Keynes says, "by the humbug of finance." They can make up most of their material losses by work. They can have whatever they can make, men and materials taking precedence over money. This is all a matter of book-keeping, but none the less it is a revolution. As Vidensky, in the little town of Kvalinsk on the Volga, mordantly said, "This Revolution of kicking stupidity out of the human race."

NOTE—The official rate of exchange quotes 550 rubles to the dollar. This, however, gives no real picture of what the ruble actually buys, since this does not take into account social services like free medicine, insurance, rest homes, etc., as well as basic price differences in Russia. One can better evaluate the ruble by comparing average wages with percentages of that wage spent on various items of one's living budget. The average monthly wage in Russia is 460 rubles. According to the Labor Research Bureau the monthly average industrial wage in the United States for September, 1942, was about 155 dollars (According to the Wages and Hours Administration some 7,500,000 industrial workers earn about 65 dollars a month.)

ITEM	AMERICA	RUSSIA
Rent (average)	15-20 per cent	4 03 per cent
3 course dinner in a factory cafeteria	50 cents	1 20 rubles
Man's shirt	1 98-2 50 dollars	10-25 rubles
Man's shoes	3.98-6.12 dollars	60-250 rubles
Butter per lb	48 cents	5 40 rubles
Bread (average loaf weighing 1 lb.)	12 cents	0.43 rubles

16. WOMEN, MARRIAGE AND JOBS

A Soviet freighter docked in the spring of 1942 at the port of Vancouver, Canada. The captain who brought it through the submarine- and mine-infested waters of the Pacific was a woman, Anna Schetinina. The farmers near Leningrad collected 200 cartloads of food and brought them by secret ways through swamp and forest to the besieged city. The drivers of thirty of the carts were women. Army officers on the Volga, expediting the flow of food and munitions into Stalingrad during the siege, were amazed at the speed of one longshore brigade in unloading the ships. This brigade which set new records for the others to follow was composed entirely of women headed by Yegovora. The Director of the Baku Oil Field with the highest war production record in Russia is a woman, Sakina Kulieva. So is the head of Circuit Line uniting all eleven railways entering Moscow, Zinaida Troitskaya.

What Soviet women are doing in this war is simply a continuation and expansion of what they have been doing in the past. Even before the war there were eleven million Soviet women serving as aviators, sailors, stevedores, bricklayers, crane operators, riveters, spot-welders. Half of the Soviet doctors were women, a third of the scientists, a fourth of the people's judges, a fifth of the deputies to the supreme Soviet and a fifth of the engineers of large-scale industry. Ten million were members of labor unions.

From the first days of the Revolution the Soviets put into practice the theories of the most advanced feminists. No privileges permitted men, denied to women. Abolition of all sex taboos and discrimination. The opening of all profes-

sions. Equal pay for equal work. The same status for married women as for single.

"In the legal field," said Lenin, "we have done everything to put women on the same footing with men." But that was only the beginning. The real struggle was to bring public opinion up to the level of the new laws, to liberate women from the tyranny of the old folkways.

It is true that, prior to the Revolution, Russian women of the intellectual and privileged classes were free and progressive. But they composed only a tiny fraction of the population. Among the eighteen million Moslems, polygamy, wife purchase, and the wearing of the heavy horse-hair veil prevailed. In the Russian villages with their fifty million women, the doctrine of their essential inferiority was deeply entrenched.

In the old *Domstroi*, the rules for managing the household, the priest, Silvester, solemnly enjoins on all husbands the duty of chastising their wives. However bizarre that sounds it is attested by scores of proverbs like: "Love your wife like your soul, *dooshoo*, but thrash her like a pear tree, *grooshoo*." Twenty years ago, in the village of Yelshanko near the Volga, I chanced upon a discussion of this moot question by a group of patriarchs. Sitting on a long bench, in front of the elders' house, they were listening with ire and indignation to the story of Ivan Petrovich, visitor from another village.

"On St. John's Day I went to market with a load of grain, sold it for twenty rubles, bought a bottle of vodka, and drank it. On the way home the rest of the money dropped from my pocket—or some devil picked it—God only knows. Naturally, I felt bad and began to beat my wife. Out of the house she ran and came back with two Communists. May the palsy shake them to pieces! The stupid red devils took me off to jail. Would you believe it?

No one did. So Ivan Petrovich repeated the story, adding that hitherto his wife had been a good wife. "It was the Women's Conference that put evil into her head."

"Arrested for beating your own wife?" asked one peasant incredulously, in a manner implying that if you can't beat your wife whom can you beat.

"My own wife," reiterated Ivan Petrovich, grimly.

"But not according to law!" put in the elder, seeing in this merely an arbitrary act of the local authorities.

"According to law—to Moscow Soviet law. The judge read it out of a book."

A dazed silence fell upon the patriarchs. The arrest of their fellow *mujik* for chastising his own wife in his own house was an outrage—sheer lawlessness in the guise of law. Where now were the sanctity of the home, the unity and integrity of the family? It was this that particularly disturbed the elder. "A man and his wife are one," he declared with moral profundity. "Did they arrest her, too?"

While the elders stubbornly held to the old ways, the youth were ardent champions of the new. I witnessed a bitter clash between the two generations on another trip to Yelshanko. To a general meeting of the village the Soviet Secretary explained that in the coming election they aimed at a 90 per cent participation of women. This brought the elders up in arms with dour shaking of heads and fists. The essence of all political statecraft and wisdom to them was voiced by the *kulak*, Abrozov, in the words, "A woman is a woman and has no place in politics."

To this oft-repeated declaration, the graybeards responded with long and vociferous applause. Longer and louder were the protests from the younger section whose exasperation found vent in the words of a Red Armyist home on furlough: "A woman is a woman," he repeated, mockingly. "So is a horse a horse, a sheep is a sheep, and old man is an old man—when he isn't a fool. But what of all that? How does it prevent a woman from taking part in the election?"

The elders, as all over the world, brought forward the home, the children, the kitchen. To this argument, the Red Armyist sarcastically retorted:

"Why don't you remember that when the grain is to be harvested? Or the hay cut in the meadow several *versts* away? Or the wheat driven fifteen *versts* to the market. Then the women seem to be able to spare the necessary time from home. And if they can stand three and four hours in a church, why can't they give one hour to vote?"

Steadily, under the impact of these onslaughts from the new generation, age-old customs and prejudices have broken down. The Soviet law on marriage embodies this change. A wife is now free to choose her work. If one of the couple changes residence, the other need not follow. All property acquired after marriage is jointly owned. There is joint responsibility also for the support of the children and the upkeep of the household. To the Bureau of Vital Statistics, *Zags*, people go to legalize their marriage. Whether the marriage is registered or not, every child born has the same legal standing and the same claim to support by both parents.

This simple procedure obtains in the case of divorce—on the principle that nothing should compel people to live together who do not want to. This does not mean that the Soviets encourage divorce. On the contrary, in the interest of the stability of the family, every effort is made to reunite the estranged couple but if they both insist on separation no reason need be given. No red tape, no lawyers, no washing of dirty linen in public, provided, of course, that the couple have come to an amicable settlement of their affairs. If not, disputes about division of property are settled in court. In case of alimony a fourth of the salary usually goes for the support of one child, a third for two children, and half for three or more.

The ease with which divorces were obtained in the early years of the Revolution led to excesses. There was a tendency to use marriage as a cloak for sexual indulgence. Some individual divorce records reached fantastic figure. When this became apparent, the whole problem was aired in the press; and became the subject of widespread debate. The result:

was a new marriage and divorce law which, while still the most liberal in the world, provides a basis for more rather than less family stability.

Like divorce, abortion also was made easy in the early days of the Revolution. Unfortunately, recourse to it was excessive. Hospital records showed that many women had ten or fifteen operations and even more. Evidently they preferred them to preventive measures. But abortion caused nervous disorders, abnormal conception, and sterility. Again, after a nation-wide debate, in 1936 a law was passed prohibiting abortion except where considerations of health demand it. Subject to supply, all kinds of contraceptives are available. In the health centers women are instructed in their use, especially as an aid in the proper spacing of children. Special funds are assigned to mothers of large families. The system of social security delivers women from most of those anxieties about having a child and his future. His proper birth, his schooling, and plan for him in the social scheme are provided for. Why not have the baby?

Contrary to the general belief, the family is a cherished institution in the Soviet Union. Russians are an affectionate and demonstrative people, and the mutual devotion of husband and wives and children is apparent in any Soviet home one visits. During the war everything possible is being done to protect the family. In the great migration of the factories to the Urals whole families were moved along with the machines in order to hold together not only the economic but the social unit. Wherever possible mothers were evacuated along with young children. Hundreds of thousands of war orphans have been adopted into families instead of leaving them to institutional care.

With this solicitude for the family it is nevertheless taken for granted that a woman should have a job. But how does a woman who works cope with the additional problems of children and a household? To begin with, most Soviet

women come from sturdy, peasant stock accustomed to hard and arduous work. As they pass into public life, the Soviets are making every effort to conserve this stamina by physical training and sports. But sturdy as Russian women are, they are not made of steel. It is too great a strain to work and at the same time be a wife, mother and housekeeper. And it should be said that it is not expected of them.

"The actual building of the new society," said Lenin, "will begin only when women are freed from petty, dreary futile drudgery. Housework in itself is utterly inconsequential and stultifying." The full emancipation of women required not only the creation of new laws and of new public opinion as to her worth and character, but new public kitchens, dining-halls, laundries, and nurseries,

In the last ten years an extensive system of those auxiliary institutions has grown up. Every factory, every kind of public enterprise, every collective and state farm has its creche and nursery school. They are organized in every way to meet the convenience of the working mother. The nursery school day coincides with the mother's working day. In the factories they are always situated near at hand so that the mother can leave and call for the baby on her way to and from work, and so that nursing mother can feed their infants at regular intervals—Russian women are almost always able to nurse their children.

Soviet nurseries are like those in England and America, only there are more of them. Four million children are cared for part of each day in seasonal nurseries on the collective farms, another one million in the year-round nurseries of the towns. There is medical inspection every morning, diets prescribed by physicians, play and sleep hours carefully arranged. For student wives with babies, it costs 35 rubles a month. More for a full time worker, less for a Red Armyman's wife. Inquiring what it really cost for each baby each month, I was told 250 rubles. This difference is the subsidy paid by the Soviets for women's equality and freedom.

As to household routine, it is much the same in Russia as anywhere else in the world. The housework is lighter as most Russians have their main meal at the place where they work. Children, too, have their main meal at school as well as their recreation. With the short working day of seven hours (in peacetime) the mother is usually home before the children return.

No longer beset by the question of marriage or a career, girls give the same thought and preparation to selecting their life-work as do boys. They expect to marry just as boys do. It is not a matter of either or—but both. Even if a woman slows up on her outside work when her children are small, the interruption is regarded as temporary and does not mean a complete break. There is universal acceptance and social approval of women's activity. Her prestige is dependent primarily on herself, not on her husband's position. Madame Ivy Litvinov, speaking to an audience of Washington women said :

"I notice that at this meeting all the women are introduced as the charming wife of Mr. So-and-so—even me! We don't have that in Russia. There are no so-called charming people! Nobody would go to hear me speak because I am the wife of an official. A Soviet woman is an individual personality, standing on her own achievements—not a shadow of her husband's importance." That is true. Many women have jobs superior in authority and income to those of the men they have married. Their homes are run on the pooled salaries of both if they are city dwellers. On collective farms women are paid for their work in the fields, which formerly they did without remuneration. Their new status and achievements have been a great impetus to their feeling of self-respect and dignity. Their faces light up as they tell of their training, how they climbed up to be heads of tractor brigades or cattle ranches, forewomen in factories, directors of experimental institutions. They take pride in records made

in shops, laboratories, and farms, and their husbands and sons are proud of them.

No subject elicits a more animated response than some question about a woman's work. It was a favorite ruse of mine to break the ice. Shrewd observations would fly back and forth, sly cracks, soft laughter. Once in Poltava, to the question I put to one woman, "Does your husband help at home?" she made the answer understood the world over :

"I don't want him messing things up by trying to get dinner ; but he tidies the house and brings in the water. In fact, he is so orderly that you would hardly recognize him as a Russian."

"Do men mind their wives working?"

"Mind their wives working? If wives are content to stay at home, it is the husbands who are dissatisfied and taunt them asking if they have no spirit. Why aren't they like other women? With us, divorces come, not from women working outside the home, but because they don't work."

As proof of this attitude another woman said : "One of my friends had a baby. She and her husband thought that she ought to stay home and devote her full time to the child. But after a few months I could see that she was growing thin and was not happy. So I said privately to the husband, 'Home life is having a bad effect upon your wife. She, too, must be one of us and have a job.' "

Another time talking with a group of young hikers in the Caucasus, one man volunteered : "My wife comes home and tell me of the interests of her work—her troubles and triumphs. I see she has a full, satisfying life. Naturally, that makes me happy. Our wives are interesting persons. They have not lost any feminine charm for us, either. The only trouble with the Soviet family is that we do not have enough time with one another. My wife is the principal of a school. She directs the studies of hundreds of girls and boys, but has little time to teach her own three children. But to tell the truth, the children are busy, too. All of us come home

about the same time. Then we have wonderful evenings together. Only there are not enough of them. But we have this advantage: I don't have to overwork or worry about leaving anything to my children. I know they will have their education and a job, and will advance according to their abilities. The thing I have to do is to make their day-to-day lives as rich in experience as possible."

To the question, "What happens if a wife is offered a good job in another section of the country?" the same man answered:

"Yes, there are such cases, I know four of them, and it was the men who gave up their jobs and followed their wives. If the wife is the more gifted, or she does the more important works, she gets the right of way. They talk it over. There is no difficulty in a really happy marriage."

"In a really happy marriage, perhaps not," amended a woman with a twinkle in her eye; "but once in a while a woman wants to leave home. You know! Miraculously comes the call to go away and study, take a course of training. Her friends raise their eyebrows. It may not be entirely business."

"And the husband? How does he feel?"

"One cannot say what is in a man's mind."

"But you don't find many men asking women to give up their work?"

"No that they don't do. But there are many complications that arise that are not easy," put in a young woman, editor of a newspaper. "My husband is in the Far East now building a factory. I do not know when I will see him. My work is in Moscow, I love my work. One year is nothing. We part these days for a year as lightly as for a week-end. But when it is several years, it becomes a matter of serious concern. We are realistic enough to know that a long separation means other arrangements. We do not face these things easily as the outside world supposes. They cause us much

suffering. But they are purely personal matters and not important in these times."

"Do most women try to get work alongside their husbands?"

"Yes, and many are happier than ever before. Work is always easy to get. It is only the highly specialized women who must debate with themselves what is the most precious—their love or their work. I, myself, have shed tears often. Once I found myself with three other engineers' wives going to mid-Asia to a big construction job to which our husbands had been assigned. We all had our own work in Moscow, but we were going out to see if we could stick it. The trip was long—two days and two nights. For hours we all talked together. One woman was a brilliant young physician, working under one of the most eminent men in the country. She was learning, perfecting herself, becoming more valuable to society. Wasn't the work she might do for the country as important as his? He could work better if she were with him; but she could not work so well. That was the way we talked."

"What happened?"

"Two stayed; and two of us returned—the physician and myself. She cried all the way coming back on the train till she had me crying, too."

"Did that mean divorce?"

"No. Our husbands in due course managed to get transferred. But the young physician sometimes laughs and says that she is so busy that even with her husband in Moscow she hardly sees him. He might just as well be a thousand miles off in mid-Asia. She says she is so busy that she even has no time to have children."

In Russia the whole attitude about sex is direct and natural. It is a subject of public discussion like any other matter. Men and women are placed in the same sleeping compartments on trains, and visit each other freely in private rooms. No chaperons. No fetish made of chastity. Adultery unmentioned in the criminal code. No such thing as an illegitimate

child. The single standard for men and women. The legalization of birth control.

Is not all this conducive to license and laxity? In theory, perhaps, yes. In practice, no. At any rate, the general impression is that Russians are vastly less preoccupied with sex than we in the West. For this there are many reasons. "The peasants," says Hindus, "have ever regarded sex with undisguised frankness, without that sense of curiosity, mystery, horror, and sin with which Puritanism and chivalry have invested it." Before the West ever heard of night clubs, old Russia had half a million *keli*, cottages rented by the peasant girls in which, without losing their virginity; they sang and danced and often slept together with the village youth till morning. This is the Slavic equivalent of "bundling" which was practised in New England, and through it, young people often found their mates. Such institutions and practices as mixed bathing without costumes, continuing to some extent in the present, have long accustomed Russian men and women to mingling together with a singular unconsciousness of sex.

Besides this absence of inhibitions, there is a more Spartan attitude toward life, and there are fewer rich foods and luxuries to stimulate the body. Nor is the imagination excited by erotic suggestions in plays, pictures, or stories. Public life in peacetime as well as war absorbs the interests and energies of youth—and moral obloquy falls upon him who dissipates his powers in self-indulgence.

Apart from the biological implications of sex there is the exaltation of its social and esthetic significance. True, there have been fulminations in the press against excesses and promiscuity. "Does the normal man drink from the same glass from which a dozen others have drink?" asked Lenin. True there are still crimes of passion. Although the green-eyed monster, jealousy, as a "bourgeois" emotion, should have been exorcised from the human heart by the Revolution, one notices no great diminution in its ravages.

Warm-hearted, free-minded, and forthgiving are the Russian women in their personal relations. Eager, vital and loyal in their public life. No wonder that against the Nazis who would relegate them to the kitchen and the nursery they are working and fighting so fiercely and steadfastly.

In response to the demands of the war, the movement of women into public life has been greatly accelerated. The eleven million women in industry have increased to fifteen million. They are working as miners of coal and iron, as train dispatchers, telegraphists, stokers and drivers of locomotives, often in the zone of fire; as crew on oil tankers, where all are women from captain down to cabin-boy—or rather, cabin-girl. Most of those who went out in the sleet and mud to build tank traps and barricades in the defense of Moscow were women.

In the Donbas, as the Nazis drove deeper into the Ukraine, every able-bodied miner joined the people's volunteers or the guerrillas. Thus it was at the Shlangovy colliery which the men voted to close till they could return. When Bykov; leader of the miners' union, took the news home to his wife, she called her neighbors together. The miners' wives sent a delegation to the mine superintendent and chief engineer and persuaded them to turn the mine over to the women.

The first day Bykov's wife mustered twenty women and a retired foreman taught each woman in turn the job her husband had left. She herself took over her husband's pneumatic drill. Another operated the skip going down into the mine. Another became motorman on the underground train. It was hard going at first and there were several accidents but none fatal. Then other women who had held back at first, lacking confidence in their strength for such a task, joined them. By New Year's production was only 20 per cent below what it had been in peacetime and Bykov wrote her husband:

"If you've learned the soldier's trade as well as we have learned the miner's, you'll be in Berlin before the year is out.

Besides the millions of women working at war tempo in mines, mills and farms, there are a half million in the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. They are serving as stretcher-bearers, as drivers of ambulances and planes, and performing the usual duties of nurses, but often in most unusual ways. Some of their exploits and ordeals are shown in the film, *Girl from Leningrad*. As the medical unit is suddenly ambushed, the young nurse, Natasha, seizes the machine gun and saves herself and her comrades. But how different a type from that other Natasha celebrated by Tolstoy in *War and Peace*. About the only points of resemblance are that both are beautiful and both find their lovers in the end. This Natasha of the film is a prototype of the thousands of flesh-and-blood Natashas, Veras, Valentines, and Elenas.

General Mason MacFarlane, Chief of the British Military Mission to Moscow, said on his return from the front line: "I saw several army girls in uniform, wearing boots, dark blue skirts, and army blouses. Some of them were as far forward as advanced divisional headquarters. One was a medical worker, one a telegraphist, another a motor driver, and another a clerk with an air force unit. The medical girl was the one I saw farthest forward, and she was an extraordinarily brave kid. Only twenty, she had spent the day before under fire, helping the wounded get back."

For some women this is not enough. They want more direct part in the defence of their country. They wish to avenge the deaths of their sons and fathers, or take their place alongside their husbands at the front. The Soviets do not encourage their taking part in the fighting, but if they insist, they are not held back. A long and heroic list of names testifies to the resolution and courage with which women have acted in bringing down attacking planes, as machine gunners, as cavalry riders and sharpshooters. One can read of their exploits in the Soviet papers and in laconic communiques from the front.

Best known in America is the girl who in September, 1942,

with the Order of Lenin pinned on her breast, came to the International Student Assembly in Washington, Liudmila Pavlichenko. At the outset of the war she was studying in the University of Kiev to become a teacher of history. But she was an expert markswoman and in the present crisis sharpshooters were more essential to the country than scholars. So she put aside the study of history to become a maker of history. With her rifle she took her place in the trenches, the trees and hide-outs around Sevastopol and on other sectors. Cool, determined and with a deadly aim, she picked off 309 Nazis—a record surpassed by few of the men snipers . . . There are thousands like Lieutenant Liudmila* in the regular army and among the guerrillas, sharing the hardship and dangers of war as scouts; guides, snipers, train-wreckers.

The Russian women have been able to do these things because they were prepared. This investment in women's development and capacity is now paying rich dividends. This mobilization and training, just begun in England and America, has been going on for years in Russia. The nursery school and the public dining halls are well established. The personal adjustments have for the most part been made. This has given the Soviets a head start over other countries at war, and accounts in no small measure for the spirited and sustained resistance of the Russian people.

* Cf. , *Soviet women in the War against Hitlerism*. The Socialist Literature Publishing Co., Agra.

17. PUBLIC SCHOOL AND PUBLIC DOCTORS

"Behold, I make all things new!" said the Revolution. It certainly did that to the schools, turning them upside down and inside out. Education in Russia has constantly changed in response to the demands made upon it by a changing society. In the first days there was an absolute break with the past. To counteract the influence of teachers inherited from the old regime, the schools were made self-governing. The children drew up their own rules, directed their own "circles," planned their own studies. To discover more effective ways of instruction they tried out all innovations—Dalton plan, project method, brigade, and complex system.

They focused on some one theme like the village street or the budget, letting the pupils pick up reading, writing, and arithmetic by the way. To bring the children close to life and labor they worked stated hours in the fields and factories. They went on excursions to distant regions, paying their way by speeches, singing, and plays. To destroy the monopoly on higher education held by the sons of the nobles, merchants, and priests, the doors of the universities were flung open to workers and peasants without examination.

In these new schools the youth received a training quite different from their fathers. Absorbing the ideas and spirit of the Revolution, they were more social-minded, freer from the prejudices of race and nationality, far better versed in civics, economics, and politics. They could hold fourth eloquently and at length on the class struggle, the evils of capitalism, and the meaning of Marxism. But alas! while

even the children might prattle glibly of politics, they could not spell correctly. They might know that New York was the center of finance, but they did not know where it was. The schools turned out excellent Marxists, but poor engineers. This was an intolerable situation.

With the country entering the stage of gigantic construction, there was an acute need for good engineers and technicians, for highly disciplined brains and hands. To meet these exacting demands came a series of decrees drastically reforming the schools: The authority of the teachers was restored; history, geography and mathematics became formal studies; definite lessons and work schedules were established; the pupil's progress was tested by marks and examinations. This was hailed abroad as a retreat to the old system of pedagogy. But quite wrongly. The Soviets still stand firmly by Lenin's rejection of "the old textbook school, the school of drill and mechanical learning, the loading of the mind with a welter of facts—nine-tenths useless and one-tenth harmful."

In the schools of today are incorporated the best features of the first decade of the Revolution. The pupils still have a voice in the affairs of the school, sitting with the teachers on the school council and helping to enforce discipline. They still go on excursions, the new decree prescribing "three visits each term to electric stations, factories, or farms." The schools still hold to the principle that the best way to learn about life is by participating in life. While guarding against overloading the pupils with social duties, they allow them to take part in the life of the community. They still emphasize group solidarity and the responsibility of each for all.

Still quoted are Lenin's words to the younger generation to do three things—"First, study! Second, study hard! Third, study still more and still harder!" That injunction the whole nation has taken to heart as if striving in a few years to make up for the centuries of ignorance. Before the war fully a fourth of the people of the Soviet Union were studying away at something. More were enrolled in its schools, col-

leges and institutes, according to the United States Office of Education, than in any other country in the world.

In 1940, there were 619,000 students in 750 institutions of university standing. Two million young people were in high schools and technicums, 30 million in the lower grades. Teaching was going on in in 75 languages. There were schools for Armenians, Bashkirs, Chinese, Digorians, and so on down the alphabet to the Zyrians. The aim was to give every child its native tongue and culture.

Sledge-schools follow the reindeer herds of the Nentsi over the Arctic snow fields to the new feeding grounds. Migratory schools are set up for the families of seasonal workers—the cotton pickers and harvesters of fruit and grain in the South. There are Forest Schools for frail and ailing children, with windows opening into the pines and birches. Schools for clever and gifted children turn out musicians for piano, cello and harp. And there are schools for the backward, delinquent, for the deaf, the dumb and the blind.

Schooling is in no wise a monopoly of youth; nor is it confined to the regular system run by the State. Alongside of it rise up other systems conducted by and inside the Party Labor Unions and the Red Army—some form of educational effort is an intrinsic part of the activities of every big enterprise. They range from simple "circles" in drawing or physics to Scholastic Combines, like that of the Dynamo Electric plant, which has extensive courses in various technics and thousands of employees in them. There are the schools for illiterates in which 50 million have been taught to read or write—often by those who have just learned to do it themselves. At the other extreme are the Seminars in Sciences, grappling with the most complex questions under the tutelage of eminent academicians.

On education the Soviets in 1941 were spending 26 billion rubles a year, twelve-fold more than under the Tsar. As the allotment grows with each increase of the national income, the network grows more embracing. From infancy to four,

there are nursery schools; from four to seven, the kindergartens. They do not supplant the home, but supplement it. Together, they collaborate to assure the children the proper food, clothes and training. Particularly valuable are these pre-school classes during the war, not only in releasing many thousands of women for war work, but insuring for the children more regular habits and proper food. From eight to fourteen years' education is compulsory. The elementary grades are called the Seven Year Schools. When the high school years are added, they are known as the Ten Year Schools. The Soviets hoped that by the end of the Third Five-Year Plan all schools would be of this type, carrying every pupil through the grades from eight to eighteen years. But the Nazis had other plans.

During war, the Soviets give the children in the elementary schools some part in the country's defence. Believing that they will suffer less from the impact of war if actively engaged in fighting it, and needing every bit of available labor power real work is delegated to children in their free time, from growing vegetables and filling sandbags, to practising with hand grenades. They are taught how to take care of themselves and others in air-raids, to serve as roof watchers, to douse incendiary bombs. Out of the war has been born a children's organization called the "Timurites" which has swept the country. It originated in a popular juvenile book called *Timur and His Gang*, which depicts a group of children banding together to help Red Armymen's families. They have hideouts, secrets and signals. The book dramatizes comradeship, initiative, discipline and courage. Through it Soviet children are learning in their own way the grim lessons they need to know in this war.

So great is the upsurge of patriotism that many boys—and girls, too—run away to the front or join the guerrilla bands just as ten-and twelve-year-old lads did in the American Civil War. The stories told of heroic children stir the responsive imagination of those in school—make them restive. One

little girl in a letter complained bitterly of her dreary studies and humdrum tasks. Her mother, a famous writer, responded:

"Your classroom is the front. Your country, for which you are so eager to give your life, needs literate, educated people. Hitler would like you to close your books. You want to strike a blow at him? Strike him with the excellence of your studies. Your heroism will be manifest in your ability to study even though war is thundering about you, Summers, you will help on the farm. Drive your tractor as though it were a tank. The earth you dig is Hitler's grave. You say that you read to the little ones and that it is nothing. On the contrary, your tender care of children separated from their parents is a bullet that makes the Nazis suffer. You want to be a hero? You can be one, little daughter, wherever you are.

Thousands of teachers and students were part of the great trek to the East. While the engineers were setting up the factories in the new sites, they set up the new schools in log huts, in tents and in *yurts* made of felt and staves. When these were lacking, they held classes in the open air—taking up in the new places the lessons left off in the old. Often it has been, not one move, but several, as danger followed them. In hastily loaded trucks or trains, they were carried East and still farther East. Sometimes the Nazis came so fast that both homes and parents were destroyed before the eyes of the children. These children, picked up in woods and fields by rescue squads, are temporarily adopted or given homes closely connected with regular schools—the teachers acting as mothers while factories or labor unions raise the funds to support the emergency homes.

Newest development in education are the Labor Reserve Schools, set up to meet war needs and create a skilled labor reserve for industry, the building trades, and transport. Boys and girls over fourteen are supported wholly by the government as they are educated. Out of these courses, 1,400,000

have been graduated to take the place of men called into the army.

While these new vocational schools were a war measure, they do not violate the fundamental purposes of Soviet education but only extend and intensify what has always been going on. All schools have stressed training, to some extent, in the basic skills and technics of industry and agriculture. While they gave the usual courses in science history and mathematics, they emphasized the principle that, if the rising generation is to take its rightful place in building a modern technical society, they must know the principals of energy, the organization of industry, the whys and wherefores of human labor. In fact, the farther one goes up the educational ladder, the closer is the tieup with industry. So close that the technical colleges are no longer under the Commissariat of Education. The whole training of these specialists is in the hands of the commissariats that will later employ them. The Commissariat of Health educates its physicians and nurses; Heavy Industry runs 115 institutes for preparing engineers and electricians; Agriculture, 56 schools for turning out aronomists: Timber trains its foresters; Finance, its bankers.

Still more to the point, these specialists are being educated at the places where the actual work is done. Why build a metallurgical experimental laboratory in Moscow when there is such a big one already operating in the greatest steel plant in the country—Magnetogorsk? Hence mining engineering colleges are at the mines—electrical institutes at power stations. The student in an institute of transport, besides his mathematics, history, economics and chemistry, engages in signaling, switching engines, and making up timetables. The student archirect must pass his period of apprenticeship through all stages of actual building, from laying bricks and mixing cement to acting as an assistant foreman. The aim is first-hand contact with all problems from manual labor up to management. In this way theory goes hand in hand with

practice. Periods of study alternate with actual work in the field. What a student learns out of books today, he may test out in a bank or blast furnace tomorrow. Instead of being abrupt, the transition from academic life into the work-a-day world is gradual and easy. Thus the function of the school is two-fold : *To explain society to its builders and at the same time to initiate them into it.*

Health. "Only a strong and intelligent people can build socialism." Ill-health, like illiteracy, is not the private affair of the individual to be indulged in as he sees fit. For it is harmful, not only to the sufferer, but to his community as well. Vitally concerned with the people's health as with their education, the Soviet Union seeks to provide them freely with both. All hospitals, rest-homes and drug-stores are socialized. Ninety-eight per cent of the doctors, nurses and orderlies are civil servants. Nearly all medical students are supported in their five-year courses out of State funds. This is State medicine with a vengeance.

That prevention of disease is better than cure is the idea implicit in the name of the People's Commissariat for the Protection of Public Health. The commissariat strikes first of all at the sources of the frightful epidemics which have always ravaged Russia : Against the black plague, by flying squadrons to exterminate the rats and gophers infested with the pestilential fleas. Against typhus, by destroying the dirty louse that, as Lenin said, "threatens to conquer Socialism." Against malaria, by draining the mosquito-breeding swamps.

This commissariat supervises the work of the sanatoria in some six hundred health resorts, "the repair shops of the workers." Among them are the resorts located at the carbonated springs in the Caucasus, the medicinal and mud baths of the Sea of Azov, the gypsum and peat silt centers around Moscow, the *koumiss* establishments with their milk from mares grazing on the steppes. From the sub-tropics they reach beyond the Polar Circle where the germ-free Arctic

air is inimical to head colds and pneumonia, and where broken bones mend more rapidly.

It directs the experimentation and investigation in the medical research institutes. There are thirty of them in Moscow, alone: Tropical Diseases, Control of serums and Vaccines Hydrotherapy, Aviation Medicine, Vitamins and Public Feeding. It carries to the people insistent propaganda on the rudiments of medicine and hygiene, stressing the causes rather than the symptoms of disease. In big museums, like that of Motherhood and Childhood with its slogan, "The basis of health is laid in infancy," it has model rooms, beds and proper food in wax specimen. In little "sanitation corners" hang vivid posters against the scourge of flies and the Russian habit of sleeping with windows sealed tight. It stages "mock trials" in which the tuberculosis germ is haled before a court and charged with manslaughter.

The health Commissariat takes an active part in changing the conditions under which the people must live and work. After every diagnosis in the big polyclinics, a nurse visits the patient's home to report on the environment and recommend improvements. Doctors can press reform of any condition that menaces the general well-being of the public. It is part of their function to keep a vigilant eye on the healthy as well as the sick. Factory and food inspection, the prevention of industrial accidents and occupational diseases are measures pursued to a certain extent in all countries. Under the Soviets, where the State carries the cost of illness, and finds it cheaper to keep its citizens fit, there is an added stimulus to extend the scope of these services. Thus in laying out the new cities or remodelling the old, physicians are on the Planning Commissions to select sites that are healthy, to insist on space between houses, proper drainage, clean water, parks and sport fields.

So important does the Commissariat of Health consider sport to be in its program of preventive medicine that it

assigns over 5,000 specially trained health officers to the physical culture "circles" and clubs. The old Russian was inclined to be rather indolent and flabby. "His chief pastimes", says Sir Maurice Baring, "were singing, endless conversation, chess playing, broiling himself red in steam-baths, guzzling tremendous amounts of tea and vodka." In all these the Russians of today are not without a certain degree of proficiency. There are over a million in the chess-playing circles, the last news of the tournaments are cried in the streets, the names of the victors flashed over the country.

To these old favorite indoor sports is now added a great zest for all kinds of outdoor ones—from tennis to mass parachute-jumping. Hundreds of thousands follow the horse races, cheer themselves hoarse at the Moscow-Leningrad football matches, watch the sprinters, divers, discus throwers and pole-vaulters in the All-Union Spartakiads of Sport and the Water Festivals. More significant than the exploits of star athletes is that the whole population is increasingly taking part in some form of sport or exercise. To meet these needs there are some 1,500 skiing stations, boating and swimming clubs, 2,500 gymnasiums, 4,500 stadiums and playing fields, 60,000 "circles" with over 10 million members. So keen are they about sports that even with the Nazis hammering at the gates of Moscow and Leningrad, football, basketball, and rowing have gone on; and six million skiers took part in the winter cross-country run.

The emphasis is not on professionalism, but on all-round development: getting everybody into some form of sport or exercise; training sureness of eye, steady nerves, dexterity and endurance; creating a citizenry adequately prepared to serve the country as it builds and to defend it when attacked. That is why this physical training is going on everywhere and at all times, not only on vacations and off-days, but during working hours. In some factories the machines are stilled a few minutes for everyone to go through breathing, stretching.

or setting-up drills. In certain occupations special exercises are instituted to counteract fatigue and improve the general stamina and morale. The farmers likewise are going in for sports and gymnastics. Many big collectives have their sport fields, courts, and grounds for basketball and *gorodki*, an old-time village game of skittles. Thanks to the liberation from ceaseless drudgery effected by the machine, even in the harvest season there were in peacetime interludes for games and dancing.

Finally, the Commissariat of Health organizes and staffs the medical centers for the care of the sick. It aims ultimately to provide every big collective farm, fishery, factory or mill with a unit of doctors and nurses paid for out of State and insurance funds. Large factories have hospitals of their own. Each city district of a certain size has its central polyclinic with special departments which reinforce and assist the smaller units. All medical services, including X-rays, blood tests, surgery, obstetrics, dentistry, drugs, are practically free. Any sick person may send for a doctor from his factory or farm, or from the polyclinic of his district. He may choose whom he will, and change if he is dissatisfied. He may even ask a physician from some other district to call in his free time ; but this constitutes private practice and must be paid for. Within these limits he has the benefits of a staff of specialists, treatment in the hospital, full wages for a limited period while ill ; and, if necessary, convalescence in one of the many rest-homes.

To staff these polyclinics of the cities and medical centers in the country, young doctors have a five-year course, many being trained on fellowships at State's expense, get fixed regular salaries later while practising and pensions on retiring. On graduating they must spend the first three years wherever they are sent, usually into the rural districts where there is still a great dearth of doctors. After that the young physician may choose his specialty and settle where he likes.

Already apparent are the effects of this nation-wide pro-

gram of health. The old lethargic, passive, indolent Russian is disappearing. Sports are developing a new type—sinewy, active, hard of muscle, tanned by the sun. The recruits to the Red Army show an increase of weight, chest measure and stature over those of ten years ago. The life span has lengthened, already adding six years to the age of men, and eight to women. In a single decade the cholera and typhus plagues have been practically eliminated. Most of the soothsayers with their malodorous medicine spells and incantations have been driven from the villages; the incidence of tuberculosis, trachoma and venereal disease greatly reduced; the infant mortality rate cut in half.

Not only in serving the people in peace, but in caring for them during war, this comprehensive health system is proving of immense value. But for this program the 23,000 physicians of 1913 would never have been enlarged to the 140,000 of today, nor would they have been distributed as they now are throughout the country in well-established medical centers. As millions of people were evacuated to the East, their medical corps went with them. Bacteriologists to examine the streams and spring and see that the water was not polluted; sanitarians to disinfect clothes and barracks so that cholera and typhus would not appear; doctors and nurses to care for the ill and for the victims of cold, heat and hunger. Packed for days into freight cars or housed in temporary shelters, that there have been no serious outbreaks of epidemics among such masses of congested humanity is not the least impressive achievement of the Commissariat of Health.

Equally impressive is the record of the medical corps at the front. With a decade of teamwork and health campaigning to season them, they have been able to work out tremendous savings on the field of battle. Closely integrated with the mobile, mechanized army divisions, they are equipped and prepared to give surgical attention in the first-line zone. In the last war the wounded lay in the open till nightfall, and were then brought in under cover of darkness. Not so today.

Machine-gun fire or rifle hail, barbed wire or bursting bomb, the wounded are somehow rescued. Dogs, sleds, ski-shod stretcher-bearers, tanks carrying first aiders, or nurses packing the wounded on their backs, they get them beyond firing-range. After treatment in underground operating rooms with field surgery they get them to the rear by ambulance planes and motor corps. Chief Surgeon Burdenko of the Red Army reports that they have been able to save 90 per cent of the wounded and restore to active service about 70 per cent, five times as many as in the last war.

Not a little responsible for this record is the work done in blood transfusion and preservation of plasma by the Russian Bruikhonenko, to whom the whole world is indebted. Daily in planes fresh blood is dispatched to the front in shock absorbing ice-boxes, or carried frozen or dried. Daring new methods of transplanting nerves and even storing nerves have been tested. Great advances have been made in plastic surgery, treatment of shock, concussion, frostbite, hemorrhage, dysentery, Sulpha drugs are widely used for disinfecting wounds and burns. There has been practically no tetanus or gangrene, thanks to precautionary serums and treatment.

Some doctors combine medical work with fighting in the guerrilla detachments behind the German lines. One of these wrote :

"I often think how I would have stared at anyone who told me a year ago that it was possible to treat a wound in a half-dark dugout. But in the complicated conditions of guerrilla warfare—in the depth of the forest, in the mud of a fox hole, in the dusk with only the simplest of instruments—I have aided many such sufferers.

"As it is often impossible to leave the wounded behind the enemy lines, we have to carry them along with us violating the basic principle of complete quiet for the wounded. But strange as it may seem, incessant movement under the most varied conditions, in wind and rain, had almost no effect on the progress of convalescence. Without exception

such patients have recovered, gained weight and felt excellent.

"Collective farmers brought clothes and food to the wounded in all villages where our guerrillas stopped. An old woman in one village brewed a beverage which she declared cured all ills. All of us tried to repay in kind the love and care given us by the population. In each village I received local patients in a hut or made the rounds of the sick in their homes. The Germans had destroyed village hospitals and the people were without medical aid of any kind.

After the city of Kalinin had been recaptured from the Germans only one makeshift hospital at the railroad station had been left standing. Though the Germans had used it, the rough plank bunks were filled with dirty straw and sack-ing; and in the officers' quarters, the beds, looted from the townspeople, were covered with matted bedding. Appalled at the filth, the Red Army doctors abandoned the idea of using the building. But the wounded Red Armymen needed rest; and if place could be made for them, could safely be left here behind their own lines.

Then the villagers took charge of the situation. Though the water mains had been cut by the retreating Germans, they dragged barrels of water up the steep inclines from the Volga. They scrubbed and cleaned the building till it was immaculate. From all corners of the town the people came, pulling sleds loaded with beds, tables, wardrobes, their best linens. And not content with that, they augmented the small professional staff with volunteer nurses and doctor's aides, with orderlies and cooks. It was literally a People's Hospital for a People's Army.

18. SCIENCE AND SYNTHETIC RUBBER

To mobilize the forces of nature and to harness them for the well-being of man is the function of Soviet science. So is it, one remarks, in other countries. In the Soviet Union this is done more consciously, on a larger scale and in a highly organized manner.

To begin with, the directing brain of all scientific work in the country—the All-Union Academy of Science—is a part of the State apparatus. It is attached to the Council of People's Commissars, and, in order to make the alliance as close as possible, it is now located in Moscow. To house it, near the Lenin Hills stands an imposing complex of laboratories with a fireproof library for eight million volumes. This center serves as consultant, clearing-house, and court of appeals.

It receives and correlates the report from the Academies of Science in Belorussia, Georgia, Armenia, and other republics. It co-ordinates the activities of the 50,000 workers in science and the network of research institutes and stations, the mere cataloguing of which runs into pages: Arctic, Artificial Rain, Agro-Soil, Aerodynamics; Brains, Bees, Beans, Botanical; Chemical, Camels, Ceramics, City Planning; and so on down the alphabet to X-ray, "Yarovization," and Zoological—to list them all one would have to run through the alphabet forty-six times. Most of them are adjuncts of specific industries and trusts, carrying on research in their behalf. As they have been evacuated to the Urals and Kazakhstan, the institutes have gone with them.

Engaged in the solution of urgent war problems, they became more than ever utilitarian. Scientists have gone to fine-

*Cf. Soviet Science by C. J. Crouther, for fuller details.

tooth comb the Urals and mid-Asia for new raw materials and power resources needed by evacuated industries. They have experimented with poly-metals and problems of corrosion; they have been treating wood with resin to make it strong as metal, rotproof and fireproof, to replace aluminium and stainless steel in the making of airplanes. The famous "Yak" fighters are made not of metal but of this treated wood. They have developed new methods of growing crops on the dry steppes to take the place of fertile lands seized by the Germans. Mathematicians have turned to the job of correcting artillery fire and hydrodynamics; bio-chemists to the study of food and vitamins; biologists to war wounds, field therapy, and contagious diseases.

From the distant bases and branches reports are constantly relayed to headquarters. The Academy analyzes and classifies the incoming data, fills in the gaps, strives to avoid lag and overlapping. Most important of all, unless some weighty reason of state intervenes, it makes the newly acquired facts accessible to all. This can be done freely because the socialization of property eliminates fear of rival concerns stealing new ideas and inventions and exploiting them for their own profit. With no monopolies or private interests to safeguard, there are no secrets to be confined in laboratories, no patents to be locked up in corporation vaults, no barriers to the free circulation of findings. This is an inestimable boon to the scientist. No longer need he work in isolation or in ignorance of what others are doing. He can know exactly what progress his colleagues are making in every field and can call on them for assistance. This is in keeping with the demands of modern research for concerted effort.

Doubtless in the past great discoveries have been made by brilliant individuals. But even geniuses like Einstein and Edison were heavily indebted to hosts of investigators, their contemporaries as well as their predecessors. This will be more so in the future. With the increasing complexity of

problems, the great triumphs will be achieved through the syntheses of many minds. This is secured by the Soviet system of planning in which science, like everything else, is planned. It makes for unified effort, the concentration of many specialists on a single problem, the collaboration of the whole corps of scientific workers.

To this is added the collaboration of the whole people. Just as the Soviets assiduously seek to enlist the interest and enthusiasm of the masses in statecraft and construction, so they do in matters of research, invention, and exploration. To this end even the most eminent savants visit the factories to lecture on hydrodynamics or the splitting of the atom, and work with the Factory Production Committees in improving technical processes. The Academy of Science goes on visiting sessions to big industrial centers like the Urals or the oil city of Baku. In thousands the workers crowd into its public meetings. In tens of thousands they study the rudiments of science in "circles," in clubs, the Red Army, and collectives. In the new "Socialist cities" almost every block has a special room fitted out with test tubes, chemicals, and retorts. In the villages, "laboratory cottages" aid the farmers in testing the seeds of grain, weeds, poisons for field pests, the breeding of plants and animals. The Societies of Young Naturalists train the youth in the use of simple instruments—the drill, compass, and barometer. Thus, besides the 50,000 people to whom science is a vocation, there are millions to whom it is an avocation.

Wide vistas open out to Soviet science thanks to this co-operation of the people, the unified system of exchange of data, the unusually large funds at its disposal and the vast terrain it has to operate in. Over against these advantages outside critics set a great minus—"Soviet science is put in the procrustean bed of Marxian methods." To the Soviets that is emphatically not a minus but a great plus. The references to "red biology," "red physics," "red astronomy" do not imply that somehow science is subjected and obedient to

different laws under socialism than it is elsewhere. These terms serve rather to emphasize the organic relationship between the work of the scientists and the continuously evolving society; to remind them of the human and social responsibility laid upon them even in their most abstract studies and experiments. In vindication of the methods pursued by Soviet scientists they can point to an imposing array of solid achievements, especially in the realm of practice and technique, one example of which is the story of rubber.

In 1931 Stalin said, "We have every natural resource in our country but rubber." At the same time there was a large and fast-increasing demand for it. Industry was using ever greater amounts of rubber for belts and tubing. Transportation was shifting from wooden wagons and ox-carts to pneumatic-tired autos and trucks. The markets were clamoring for more rubber for raincoats, footgear, sanitary and contraceptive devices. In tens of thousands of tons the Soviets were importing it from abroad. This not only put a heavy burden upon the exchequer, but in event of war or blockade placed the country in a most precarious position. To remedy this state of affairs the scientists were called in and commissioned to produce rubber—to grow it, to make it, to devise some substitute for it.

They found that gutta-percha trees would flourish well along the sub-tropic coast of the Black Sea. But this area was already allocated to citrus-groves, tea plantations, gardens, and villas. A more hardy plant was needed, one that could withstand the rigorous climate of the North. They experimented with different kinds of goldenrod procured from the Edison Studios in New Jersey. From Mexico they brought in thirty species of guayule, one of which proved to be fully adaptable. Searching for some plant still more resistant to cold and pests, Soviet scientists turned to their own country. Someone suggested a shrub called *hondrilla* growing somewhere in the sandy wastes and mountains of Kazakh-

stan. Thither they went and found the nomads chewing a gummy substance. It was not the plant they were searching for, but another called *kok-sagyz*, a sort of dandelion containing rubber in the form of threads in its roots.

Other explorers brought back *tau-sagyz* and *krim-sagyz*, from the vine-covered slopes of the Crimea, secreting a milky fluid which on drying coagulates into a rubber. Altogether the various expeditions collected over sixteen hundred plants, three hundred of which are latex-bearing and six of real commercial value. Fully acclimated, some of these plants hitherto unmentioned in any botanical book may now be seen in large plantations extending from Turkmenia up to the environs of Archangel. A million acres planted to *kok-sagyz* in 1942 are expected to produce 50,000 tons of natural rubber. Our State Department asked for and received large quantities of these seeds which are now being tried out in several parts of this country.

Besides natural rubber, great successes have been scored by Soviet scientists in the making of synthetic rubber. At first it was fabricated solely out of alcohol derived from potatoes. With an already colossal consumption of potatoes for food, starch, and vodka, the Russian supplies are limited. But there are almost no limits to the peat-bogs of Russia. Turning to them the experimenters perfected a process for distilling alcohol from peat. Encouraged by these successes, they reached into other fields. If synthetic rubber could be made out of alcohol, why not from other substances? To this problem the Institute of Chemistry addressed itself and devised a cheap and satisfactory method of obtaining it from acetylene, derived in turn from lime, coal and water. Next they found ways of extracting it out of the waste-gases of oil-refineries, then from the by-product of cooking ovens.

Thus the Soviet scientists discovered that butadiene, which is the basic material in most synthetic rubber formulas, can be derived from three main sources. First, out of alcohol made from potatoes, grain, corn. Second, out of acetylene de-

rived from calcium carbide, which in turn is made from lime, coal, and electricity—all of which are plentiful in Russia. Third, out of ethylene derived from natural gases and from the “cracker gas,” of petroleum in which Russia likewise is rich.

Ordinarily butadiene is a gas from butane, but under pressure and heat, passing through a complex chemical process in which are added other constituents and a catalyst, this gas becomes a fluid latex and by a further step is transformed into solid sheets of synthetic rubber. After that it is vulcanized and manufactured. This substitute rubber has certain advantages over natural guttapercha. It has more favorable aging and dielectric properties, is more resistant to low temperatures and, most important of all, is more resistant to fire and benzine. There are many formulas, but most of all are improved by the addition of a certain amount of natural rubber. Hence the double program in Russia of both growing and making it.

As the Soviets produced rubber they made the tires. By 1933 they were trying out synthetic tires in the races on the Kara-Kum desert, getting up to 25,000 miles' wear out of them. Each year the scientists, improving the technique, were getting more rubber out of less material. Each year they were making it more viscous, tensile, rupture-proof and wear-resistant. In the Third Five-Year Plan (1938-42) 13 synthetic plants were to be built as well as 6 for the working up of natural rubber and 21 for the manufacture of rubber products. Some were erected in the oil regions to get the butadiene from the cracking of petroleum; others in the coal districts; still others close to the fields were *kok-sagyz* and guayule plants were harvested. They were scattered all over the country from Mogilev on the western frontier to Molotov, safe in the Urals; from Erivan in the mountains of Armenia to Cheremkovo in Siberia furnishing rubber for the Red Army holding the eastern frontiers against the Japanese.

By 1937 the Soviets were importing only about 23 per cent

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their needs. By 1941 almost none. In that year they created a new Commissariat of Rubber to administer a now highly developed industry. Though they have lost through Nazi occupation of the Ukraine some 60,000 tons' capacity, they still have many plants. They are second in the world in the consumption of rubber and before the war were making around 400,000 tons a year.

Only the United States surpasses the Soviets in the rubber consumed by its industry. But America is only beginning to put rubber on a war footing. With every tank requiring a ton of rubber and every plane half as much; with the need for barrage-balloons, pontoon-bridges, surgical gloves, gas masks, gun carriages, bullet-proof gasoline tanks for fighter planes, and pneumatic rafts—not to mention tires for trucks and jeeps—it is little wonder that America has been warned that shortage of rubber might lose the war. The Axis powers grappled with rubber before going to war. The only country besides these aggressor nations that in peacetime had found a way to produce its own supply of this essential wartime material was the Soviet Union.

When America declared war and our supplies of natural rubber were cut off, the Soviets offered the United States their formulas for synthetic rubber. The failure to make use of this experience and technical information as well as failure to analyze Soviet tires was noted in the Rubber Report tendered to President Roosevelt in September, 1942. The Report goes on to say, "Had the offer of the Soviets made in February to exchange full information been accepted it is conceivable that now plants for producing synthetic rubber by the successful Russian process might well be on the way to completion."

19. THE PRESS AND RADIO

The function of the press is not to make money or to entertain the reader, but to inform him and stimulate his interest and zeal in building the new society. This is done in the peculiar Russian manner, by way of erudite editorials, reports from the various "fronts,"—cultural, economic, as well as military—and interminable statistics. The opening of a new blooming-mill in the Urals is often front-page news. An abstruse discussion on Marxism may take the headlines. Chess problems occupy more space than do crossword puzzles abroad.

To the average foreigner, the papers are dry and colorless. There are no big display advertisements; no gossip columns, comic strips, stock exchange quotations; no "society" news, unless the deeds and pictures of "200 percenters," women drivers of tractors and locomotives, and parachute jumpers come under that rubric; no sensational stories of crime and passion, unless they can point a socialist moral.

On the lighter side there are cartoons, topical verses, or witty feuilletons with a sting or laugh; and of course, now there are stories of the war. While these "human interest" features are on the increase, to the average outsider the Soviet papers still seem dull and monotonous. But not to the Russians. With such avidity do they turn to them that they queue up in front of the news-stands; big editions are sold out as fast as they come off the press: and only shortage of paper prevents Soviet press from being the largest in the world.

The 859 papers of Tsarist days have expanded to over

8,000—an increase of more than ten-fold in number and fourteen-fold in circulation. And sometimes there are up to a hundred readers to a copy, thanks to out-loud reading to groups at rest-hours in the harvest fields, Red Army camps, and factories. Type is cast and papers are published in 120 languages, realizing the Soviets' goal: "For every people its own paper in its own language."

At the same time they are seeking to make them *of* and *by* the people. "A paper will be strong and vital," said Lenin, "when the five men of letters directing it are supplemented by 500 or 5,000 labor correspondents, workers who are not professional writers." "Why," asked *Pravda*, "should we send reporters to the village to write about you peasants? Write about yourselves. Never mind if you are semi-literate and must use capital letters or 'chicken-marks.' Start that way and you may end a columnist. But don't send in such items as 'Ivan beat up Manka,' or 'A new well has been dug on Petrov's farm.' Write about things that have a social significance; All that you see in nature or life that gives joy or pain to your heart; all our successes and all our sad failures. Proletarians and peasants, to pen and ink!"

In response to this rose the *Rabsekor* movement, with five million "Army," "Air," "Child," and "Photo" correspondents, sending in a steady stream of items. Besides bringing in a huge grist of news, they serve as a barometer of public sentiment, guiding the leaders in the making of new laws and the "Party Line." They reveal hidden talents which are fostered in conference and special journals from which have emerged some of the best Soviet cartoonists and authors of today. Finally, they uncover a multitude of evils—from arrogance of officials to operations of Nazi spies and fifth columnists.

The tone for the whole Soviet press is set by the capital. *Izvestia*, *News*, is the official mouthpiece of the Soviet Government; *Pravda*, *Truth*, is the spokesman of the Communist Party. Playing on their names, the wits say: "There is no

news in *Truth*, and no truth in *News*." Each of these papers, with six to eight extra large pages, has a circulation over two million. Despite limited space, often a whole page is devoted to the anniversaries of Shakespeare, Chaucer, Goethe the celebration of the 450th anniversary of the discovery of America. There were columns of congratulations and telegrams to Bernard Shaw arriving in Moscow on his seventy-fifth birthday, to Maxim Litvinov when he was decorated with the Order of Lenin on his sixtieth birthday, to Marshal Shaposhnikov—colonel in the Tsar's army, now Chief Soviet strategist and author of the three-volume *Brain of the Army*—on his sixtieth birthday, October 4, 1942.

With the advent of war, a grim note runs through editorials and headlines, *Red Star*, the Soviet Army newspaper, exhorts the soldier on to victory with the slogan: "Die—but do not surrender!" and continues with the words: "History and the people will not pardon a further retreat. No position must be abandoned while one man is still alive." And after making each officer and political instructor responsible for the impregnability of their defense, it concludes with: "It is better for him to die on the spot with his men than bear the shame of retreat."

Reporters not only write about the war, but take direct part in it. In uniforms, holding officers' rank, famous writers attached to combat troops often find themselves in positions where they have to fight as they write. Such a one was Alexander Poliakov, correspondent and commissar, who in *Russians Don't Surrender*, has told how his encircled hungry battalion after weeks of battling cut its way through Nazi lines and rejoined the Red Army. Wounded many times, Poljakov kept returning to the front and died there in the fall of 1942. Eugene Petrov, co-author of *Little Golden America*, lost his life at the siege of Sevastopol. The novelist Leonid Leonov lost an eye and the poet Joseph Utkin his hand. The dramatist Afinogenov was killed in an air raid.

Graphic artists collaborate with pressmen to produce war

posters. As fast as *Tass*, the news agency, receives bulletins it relays them to the painter-writer teams. The items are discussed and as ideas are approved the painters swiftly make the sketches and writers work out the captions—usually pungent rhymes. At top speed they are slapped up on walls and in thousands of special display windows inciting the public crowding about them to comment and laughter, and raising morale.

The cartoonists and humorists bring out a small magazine of illustrated jokes called *Front Laughs*. In bomb shelters or dugouts they take the rough sketches of Red Army men and retouch them to play up an episode, a passing jest or salty statement. "Our soldiers," said one of these artists, "find time to laugh and we find ourselves mobilized. Laughter has become an arm of the Red Army."

As the *Red Star* reflects the life and interests of the Army, so every union, co-operative, commissariat and large enterprise has its own official paper. Biggest of all is the *Peasants' Gazette* with its fifteen regional editions. By organizing, teaching, or working in the fields for three month of the year, its editors keep close touch with the life of the villagers. To its offices come 20,000 delegates bringing their complaints and petitions.

Overtake and Surpass is the publication of the Moscow Auto Works, priding itself on its output of poets and humorists as well as on its output of cars. A few hours after the crew of the sinking ship, *Chelyushkin*, escaped to a drifting ice-floe, there appeared a paper called *No Surrender*, written and edited by the castaways. As the Tajik cotton growers were digging their 240-mile irrigation canal in the Vale of Ferghana, they were reading and writing about themselves in *Stalin's Big Building Job*.

Every nationality, of course, has its own paper in its own language. And for semi-literates, or for those who want to learn Russian, is the journal, *For Those Beginning to Read*.

Edited by a Cossack woman, Kravechenko, it is attractively printed in big type, lines and colors.

Even within the German-occupied territory, the guerrilla bands get out their own sheets. On such paper as they can find they print the day's communique, news of the "Second Front," instructions on digging tank traps, stories of Nazi atrocities and hair-breadth escapes.

Most local of all local papers are the wall newspapers—usually hand-written with vividly colored headlines and mounted photographs. Wall newspapers exhort the Red Armymen: "If your ammunition is gone—stab with your bayonet! If your bayonet breaks—strike with your fists! If your fists give way—bite with your teeth!" One finds wall papers posted on barns at collective farms, on trees at lumber camps, and on derricks in the oil fields.

It is evident then that the Soviet press is much more than a purveyor of news. In the words of Lenin, it is the "collective organizer" of the life of the nation, an instrument for mobilizing the people's mind and energies for concrete tasks. On all major issues it presents a solid, serried front. Occasionally, its columns are open to hot discussions on moot questions of the day. But when the debate is closed, or any crisis arises, every publication, from the biggest in Moscow down to the tiniest sheet in a mountain village, speaks in a single voice. Sometimes it is the voice of praise, self-congratulation, and approbation. The papers break forth in jubilation over the saving of precious machines from the Nazis, an artistic film, the conquest of the stratosphere, the finding of a new frost-resisting wheat, the outpouring of donations to the Defense Fund and gifts to the men at the front.

At other times it is the voice of lamentation, of scorn or ridicule poured out upon Soviet sins and shortcomings; the breaches in the War Production Plan; the cupidity and stupidity of bureaucrats; the ignorance and incompetence of Communists; the neglect of children by their Don Juan

fathers; the bombast and boastings of orators covering ugly facts with phrases, "uttering windy words but doing nothing," Rich pickings here for enemies seeking material on Soviet follies and blundering. But in lieu of an opposition press, this "self-criticism" is imperative. While this "strongest, sharpest weapon of the Revolution," as Stalin calls the Soviet press, is used against its external foes—the Nazis and Fascists—it is often turned against itself, that is, against its mistakes and failures. *But never against the ideal and goal of the Soviets, and rarely against the general policies for attaining them.*

Radio. In its drive "for the conquest of the air" the Soviet Union has enrolled millions of members in a volunteer society called "Friends of the Radio." It stages radio festivals with thirty nationalities participating, and arranges broadcasts in sixty languages. To its seventy main stations it has added thousands of smaller ones, forming a network reaching to the farthest frontiers of the country, binding them ever closer to Moscow. The isolated native on the far-away Commander Islands may hear the bells in the Kremlin tower striking at noon or midnight, and playing the "Internationale." From its biggest 500-kilowatt stations in Moscow and Khabarovsk it flashes messages direct to America.

In the matter of news, weather forecasts and gymnastics, the programs are not unlike our own, but with no ballyhoo for toothpastes, pain-killers or breakfast foods. More time is given to lectures, both popular and technical, to plays and to symphonies.

"It is quite the regular thing," says Albert Coates, director of symphony orchestras in New York, London and Moscow, "to broadcast all the concert and not a small part of its, as we do here in the United States. As all the people are passionate lovers of music, and there are all too few receiving sets, they gather about the loudspeakers even if they must stand for hours in the snow. "For the Russian program ends

not on the hour, but whenever the composition draws to a close. Special hours are devoted to the Red Army, to collectives and to factories. On the children's programs, they hear explorers and inventors, or children themselves telling of their escape from the Nazis.

The small stations in close touch with the needs of their communities play an important part in organizing their daily life and activities. In a big plant, they not only entertain the workers with local news, humorous incidents and music, but a worker has the right to speak to his fellow workers. Attempts to suppress them for exposing evils of management have frequently roused a whole plant in indignant protest. The foreman and managers can do nothing but listen, not without trepidation, for sometimes the worker says what he thinks with vinegar and gall. Sometimes there are protests for cleaner drinking water, or better lighting. Sometimes there are ideas for bettering or increasing production.

In the Arctic a fast-growing chain of stations is reaching out from the mainland ever closer to the Pole. These stations direct the big ice-breakers convoying the ships through the fog and icebergs of the new Northern Sea Route, now the most important remaining Soviet waterway. To these the fur-hunters turn for news about the location of herds of seal, and otters, the trek of reindeer and caribou to the new moss-pastures. They replace the magic spells of the shamans and medicine men in the daily life of the Eskimos. A doctor at lone Cape Hope gets help from an obstetrician at Dixon Island for a difficult delivery. All stations are off the air while the specialist issues instructions. Three hours later the happy father announces the glad news of the birth of a son. The Polar stations shout their congratulations over the ether—"Welcome to our new Arctic citizen!" "How is the mother?" "Congratulations to the new parents at Cape Hope!"

Most important of Arctic services is the weather broadcast.

For "weather is made in the Arctic." It is the starting point of cyclones that sweep down across the plains. Forewarned, the people can fortify themselves against the ravages of sleet and snow and rain. During the weeks of 1937, when all the Arctic world, including America, was looking for Levanevsky the Russian flyer lost somewhere on the icy wastes, our weather stations in Alaska co-operated with the Russians. During this period, as Stefansson points out, our own weather reports achieved a degree of accuracy they had never reached before.

Now that the Nazis are on Russian land, the radio is put to new wartime work. Thus Moscow keeps in touch with the guerrilla forces: issues commands, sends front-line news, warns of the enemy's approach. Radio is the Paul Revere of the Soviet "minute-man." In one sector where the Red Army had retreated, guerrilla forces seized a district covering sixteen towns behind German lines, wiped out the Nazi guards and held the territory until reinforcements arrived, an exploit accomplished with the aid of radioed instructions from Moscow. But most important, of course, is the use of radio to disseminate propaganda—information, instructions and courage to the Red Army; misinformation, uncertainty and terror to the foe.

20. RELIGION*

The public has long been bewildered by contradictory reports about conditions in Russia. In no field are they more confusing to the outsider than in that of religion. He is told that all churches are closed. Then in the official report of 1941 he learns that there are some 30,000 religious societies with 58,000 priests and ministers. He is told that few people ever go to church. Then he reads of the Cathedral of Moscow packed with twelve thousand worshippers at the outbreak of war.

He is told that Russians are for the most part atheists. Then he hears the head of the Atheist League lamenting that a third of the Soviet people in the towns and two-thirds in the villages are Christians. On that basis there would be more Christians in the Soviet Union than in the whole British Empire. He is told that the Soviet State is the negation of Christianity. Then an eminent churchman like John MacMurray declares: "No structure of society the world has yet known has come nearer to embodying the social principles of Christianity." No wonder, bewildered by these two sets of opposing statements, the public asks which shall it believe.

To understand rightly the position of religion in Russia one should go back to the famous decree of January 23, 1918, separating the Church from the State. Already the great estates belonging to the monasteries had been nationalized. Now the church was divorced from education and schools made part of the public system. The church edifices were declared "the property of the people," but their free use was granted to religious societies. These are defined as "groups of

*Religion in Soviet Russia of the War Against Hitlerism gives valuable information The Socialist Literature Publishing Co., Agra.

believers numbering not less than twenty persons who unite for the satisfaction of their religious need." If not properly maintained, their premises revert to the State.

Along with the gendarmes and other functionaries of the Tsar, the priests were disfranchised. They were forbidden to serve more than two parishes or to give religious instruction to groups of children under eighteen years of age. They were obliged to confine themselves to worship, and not to engage in social and cultural activities—clubs, guilds, co-operatives. Numbers of bishops and priests were exiled or executed on charges of counter-revolutionary intrigue. Sunday disappeared from the calendar with the advent of the six-day week. In the large cities the ringing of church bells was forbidden and many bells were melted up to make tractors.

What was the cause of this antagonism of the Revolution to the Church? First, there was the antagonism of the Church to the Revolution. In the Russian Orthodox Church the autocracy of the Tsar found its most faithful servant and ally. Acting as the spiritual police of the Tsar, the priests used secrets ferreted out in the confessional to trap and destroy hundreds of the revolutionists. Under the notorious Pobedonostsev, High Procurator of the Holy Synod, over 10,000 school teachers suspected of sympathizing with the Revolution were imprisoned or sent into exile. Crosses and ikons headed the procession of progromists entering the Jewish quarters to slay, pillage and burn.

In like manner the church fell upon the sectarians like the Old believers, sending tens of thousands into exile in the distant forests and wastes. In solemn ceremony each year the Archbishop, clad in gorgeous vestments, cried out three times from the altar: "Be ye cast out, Leo Nikolaevich Tolstoy!" the choir thrice responding with the antiphonal "Amen."

After the Revolution the church's antagonism became even more bitter. When the church was disestablished, the patriarch Tikhon thundered: "That which you do is verily

a Satanic deed. For it you are condemned to hell fire in the future life and to awful curses by coming generations in the present life. We adjure all you faithful children of the Orthodox Church not to enter into any kind of association with these monsters of the human race." In the civil war that raged through Russia in 1919-1920 churches secreted arms and munitions of the reactionary anti-revolutionary forces. "Regiments of the Holy Virgin" were organized, and "Battalions of Jesus," composed largely of priests, fought against the Red Armies. Pealing bells and *Te Deums* welcomed back the White Armies of the generals and landlords to restore the old order. And long after they were defeated, the church—sometimes against its own will—was the rallying center for elements hostile to the Soviets.

Second, as the abettor of ignorance and superstition, the church was regarded as an obstacle to social and moral progress. As an indictment of the church the revolutionists pointed to the old Russian village. It took the peasants' money to build magnificent temples and allowed them to live in miserable straw-thatched huts. It gave them ikons to pray to in misfortune, and left them to the ravages of plagues and diseases—a third of the children died before their first birthday. It mesmerized them with mystic rites, with bells and incense, while 70 per cent were unable to read or write.

Not only did the church do little to deliver the peasant from his darkness and misery, but the effect of its teaching—submission and contentment with one's lot—was to paralyze his will, to leave him without a desire to deliver himself. Ludicrously primitive and unproductive as were the old methods of farming, what point in trying to change them, argued the peasants, when all things were in the hands of God? Angrily they rose up to resist and persecute as infidels the few advocates of a new way in farming. Such a pioneer was Yarkov, a disciple of Tolstoy, whom I frequently visited in Seltso village. When Yarkov showed the way to bigger harvests by the rotation of crops, they turned upon him,

"So you are more clever than God?" they shouted in scorn and fury. "If it pleases God, He can make crops rise up from stones. If it displeases God, there will be no crops at all. You can't outwit God."

With these ideas deep-rooted in them, the peasants spurned the new methods urged by the agronomists and stubbornly clung to the practices prescribed by the church. Instead of spraying insect-infested fields with chemicals, they marched around them with waving banners and crosses. Instead of running irrigation ditches into the drought-stricken areas, they sprinkled them with holy water. Those people in other countries who most assail Russia for its attitude to the church, had they lived in Russia would often be the very ones most furiously assailing the church.

A third reason for the indifference, if not the hostility, to the church, was that it diverted the peoples' minds and energies away from building the new society. Under the old order, Communists would not deny that religion performed a certain function. Into another mystic world, it provided an escape from present miseries, uncertainties and fear. In the future society envisaged by the Soviets, these evils are for the most part destined to disappear. With the abolition of exploitation and injustice, man will no longer be hounded by the sense of guilt and sin. In solidarity with his fellows, in a community of equals, he will no longer be stricken by loneliness and isolation. With freedom and means to live out life to the fullest, he will no longer feel thwarted and frustrated. Depending on science and himself rather than prayers, man will realize for the first time, the tremendous potentialities in himself.

With their lives dedicated to the Revolution, the leaders felt no need for the escapes and compensations of religion for themselves, and saw no need of them for others. Give the people the vision of a new world without poverty or oppression. Let them lose themselves completely in the struggle to achieve it. Let them explore the universe, enriching

themselves with the wonders of science and the beauty of art. Let them understand that in humanity their noblest deeds and thoughts and aspirations go on forever. In these, they will find the true meaning of life. the fulfillment and satisfaction of their deepest desires.

This is true of millions of Soviet youth whose imaginations were captured by the Revolution. From the lives of the saints, they turned to the national heroes who for their convictions unflinchingly endured prison, exile torture and death. In the chants and songs of the Socialist Fatherland, they found the same inspiration their father found in the ancient hymns and liturgies of the church, and in the embannered parades, the pageantry of the processions of the cross. In the theater, cinema and radio they absorbed the new emergent ideology, ethics and culture.

Their aim is to create in the people a social-mindedness—that men will truly find themselves, not in the exaltation of their own egos, but in service for the common good. Certainly that spirit is manifest in legions of Soviet youth, voluntarily enduring every hardship and danger first in building the foundation of the new society; and now in its defense. Enough of them to lead Sherwood Eddy to observe: "While we profess a faith, the Russians possess one."

While the Soviets sought to imbue the rising generation with the new ideals, by various devices it strove to weaken the power and place of the old faith. Toward this end it sought to supplant the appeals and ministrations of religion with others. "Thrice is a man wonderful," says a Russian proverb; "at birth, marriage and death." As the church sought to make these events significant with its ceremonies so did the Communists with their "red weddings," "red funerals" and "red christenings."

The chief agency for anti-religious propaganda was the League of Militant Atheists, aiming at "dethroning the heavenly Tsars as we have the earthly ones. At the height of its militancy in 1932, it counted some five million members

headed by Yaroslavsky and a number of former priests. Its activities once ranged from the translation of scientific works like Frazer's *Golden Bough* to inducing stores not to handle Easter egg dyes. Christmas trees, or *kosher* food; from the conducting of public debates with the clergy to campaigns against the ringing of church bells, the drinking of vodka, the use of ikons and relics to ward off diseases.

More effective in exposing the crass superstitions fostered by the church were the anti-religious museums. Most of them were former monasteries and cathedrals which were converted to display what were termed "exhibits of a past civilization," among which were an amazing collection of relics and amulets: hundreds of nails from the true cross, tears from the eyes of the Virgin, milk from her breast, wisdom tooth of Moses, wood from the cradle of Jesus. Besides these relics were diagrams showing the colossal revenues of the church, Charts and documents graphically represented the history of religion with emphasis on the evils of clericalism and the holy inquisition.

To a modernist and liberal in religion there was little or nothing particularly anti-religious about these museums. Nor for that matter was there in many of the publications and pamphlets of the league of Militant Atheists. They explain the origin of hail and lightning, the danger of spreading infectious diseases by hundreds kissing the same ikon; that an eclipse is not a portent of war or some monster swallowing the sun. In other countries this literature would be classified as educational. But so obscurantist and unscientific were the teachings of the Russian Orthodox Church, the mosques, the synagogues, and the fundamentalist sects of Russia that the simple presentation of a modern view of the world seemed an assault on religion.

On the outbreak of war the league of Militant Atheists disbanded and its paper ceased publication, with one last blast at the Nazis for their persecution of religion! For some years past it had been declining and the sharpness of an-

tagonism between it and the church had been softened. Indeed, one branch on disbanding left its records in charge of the village priest!

What is the present position of the church and religion? The Soviet constitution guarantees to members of all faiths, freedom of worship. But only in Georgia and Armenia, where the churches were relatively friendly to the revolution, do they enjoy freedom of religious propaganda. Tens of thousands of churches, shrines, syngogues and mosques are closed. Few candles now burn in the wayside shrines. No longer are the ikons and crosses carried around the fields in solemn procession to drive away the insect pests and drought. In the village homes the somber ikons are often replaced by potraits of Lenin, Stalin, Timoshenko. The pilgrimages to the wonder-working shrines have almost ceased. The church is shorn of its former privileges and powers. The social pressure which in other countries induces people to go to church, in the Soviet Union operates to keep them away.

On the other hand, on great festival days like Easter the churches are overflowing. Amid clouds of incense the priests in gorgeous vestments and golden crowns intone the impressive liturgy of the Orthodox Church. In remote regions more children are christened than in similar district in the West. Protestant sects like the Baptists report a million or more members.

Many former disabilities and restrictions on the church have been relaxed or rescinded. The once disfranchised clegry now vote on the same terms as other citizens. During 1936-37, of the 157 suits in Soviet courts affecting religion, 78 per cent were won by the church. In 1938 Kalnin, President of the Supreme Soviet, told me that one of his frequent duties was the reopening of village churches that had been closed by the action of local zealots. In assailing the comic opera *Titans* for its false and frivolous picture of the historic baptism of the Russians *Pravda* pointed out that formerly

at any rate, Christianity was a progressive force in the life of the people. The former scurrilous assaults on religion are now eliminated from textbooks, theater and cinema. Any mockery or insult to the feelings of believers is subject to penalties. The making and sale of ikons are now legalized.

In 1939 the new Soviet Republic of Lithuania gave officiating priests as well as peasants a certain number of acres from the land fund. In 1941 the seven-day week was restored, making Sunday the rest day for all. One of the three newly created decorations for Soviet commanders is named after a canonized saint of the church—Alexander Nevsky. The Moscow radio appeals to Catholics, Protestants and Jews throughout the world to unite in the war against the Nazis.

One must not attach too much significance to these facts, not to that report about Stalin calling for God's blessing on President Roosevelt. Religious terms are woven into the Russian language, and often Lenin said, God help us. One should not look forward in the immediate future to seeing Stalin pass the collection plate in church!

On the other hand, one cannot help note an evolution in the attitude in the Soviet government toward the church. In tracing this, the Reverend Benjamin, Metropolitan of the Aleutian Islands and North America, states: "At first it was negative; then merely suspicious; later peaceful; most recently—it seems to me there is recognition of the usefulness of the church."

This is paralleled by a similar evolution on the part of the church from hostility to the Soviets to whole-hearted acceptance. This came in part by necessity—if the church had not adjusted itself to the new society, it would have ceased to exist. In part it is due to a recognition that in their social and ethical aims the Soviets and the church are one. As Ambassador Davies states it: "Christianity could be superimposed on Communism without doing violence to either." This is the conviction of many churchmen in Russia and throughout the world. However the changes came about,

it is a far hark from the days when the Patriarch Tikhon anathemized the Soviets to the Patriarch Sergei in 1941 offering fervent prayers and directing impassioned appeals calling on the faithful and all people to support the Soviets. From the leaders of all faiths came similar exhortations—from the head of the Russian Baptists to the Jews and Moslems.

This support is not confined to prayers and preachments. Churches are now centres for collections of gifts for the Red Army. Hundreds of priests are in the fighting forces at the front. Hundreds more are aiding in every way the guerrilla bands behind the German lines.

Among many such cases that are reported is that of Father Andrei. For a month after the Nazis occupied his village, he and his church were unmolested. Then one by one the church treasures began to disappear. First the altar plate followed by the gold-embroidered robes, the ancient ikons and testaments. Then, one Sunday morning, arriving at the church to hold services, he found it filled with German soldiers. They were breaking up the altar, the doors and screen and throwing them out. In answer to Father Andrei's protest, they said that they must have more space in the church as they were turning it into a stable.

That night, packing up his few belongings, and taking a last look at the looted village, he made off to the forest. Before morning, he found what he was seeking—a detachment of guerrillas.

Though they knew Father Andrei to be upright and honest, his contact with the Germans made them wary. But as he faithfully performed the minor duties assigned him, mistrust changed to confidence and affection. Not only did he know to handle a rifle, but he knew every path through swamps and thickets. Once, when the band was encircled by Nazis, by a devious way, known only to him, he led them to safety. But in the encounter, both commander and commissar were killed.

In electing a new leader, the choice fell upon Father Andrei. Increasing in numbers the band became famous for its daring and destructive raids upon the enemy. One day came a message from the High Command, summoning the leader and his two aides to Leningrad. At staff headquarters, after high commendation from a general for his bravery and skill, there was pinned upon his breast the highest of Soviet decorations—the Orders of Lenin.

Then, unaware that this guerrilla leader was a priest, the general suggested that his long beard made him conspicuous to the enemy, and he might better cut it off. "True," agreed Father Andrei. "It might be better. But I expect to resume my former vocation when the war is over."

"And what might that be?" asked the general.

"I am a priest," said Father Andrei. "Hitler drew his sword against my country and defiled my church. I am fighting him as a Russian patriot and a Christian soldier."

In *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, Professor Rauschenbusch showed that nations and classes rising to power cherish those institutions that aided them in their struggles. The pre-Revolutionary record of the Russian church reveals no weighty reason why the workers and peasants should nurture toward it feelings of regard and tenderness. In the long, bitter struggles to establish the Soviet government, they received not help but hindrance from the church. In the present still more bitter and terrible struggle to defend and preserve the Soviets however, the churches are doing all they can. In solidarity with the people, they are fighting loyally and gallantly in defense of the Russian land.

Is this an earnest of better relations after the war? Will there be a further evolution in the direction of those concepts of religious freedom held in the West? That, like so many other things, depends upon the nature of the peace. A sense of security is always conducive to the spirit of liberalism and tolerance in any country.

What goes on in Russia depends likewise in some small

measure upon ourselves. Much energy has been spent in lamenting over people not going to church in Russia. What would be the result if this energy could be directed upon the millions who never go to church in America and Britain? Practice is more powerful than precept, and certainly more effective than hostile criticism and assault. The example of more Christianity at home could not be without its effects upon Russia or the rest of the world.

21. WHAT WILL RUSSIA DO AFTER THE WAR?

Numerous as the blueprints and plans for the post-war world are speculations as to Russia's place in it. In the Axis scheme Russia as a political entity is slated to disappear. Russia, the great "Heartland of Eurasia," according to Haushofer, the geopolitical strategist of the Nazis, is the land pivot of the world. The Germans and Japanese must conquer and divide this strategic centre before they can safely set out to "loot" the "peripheral continents" of the Western Hemisphere.

The geopoliticians on our side of the world are not without dreams of dominion for the Anglo-American team. They foresee an "American Century" in which the United States is master of the Western Hemisphere, with imperialism on a bigger and better scale. The role of Russia in this scheme is to be pitted against other states in a precarious global balance of power. All countries in a perpetual state of mobilization and friction, leading to a third bigger and bloodier world war.

In contrast to these schemes relegating Russia to a negligible role are those which give it an all-dominating one. Some see Russia, like a giant flushed with victory, dictating the peace. Others see the Comintern galvanized into new life, and the Red Hords sweeping over the frontiers, bringing revolution and carnage to Europe. Or in the old-fashioned imperialistic manner they see Russia embarking on a career of looting and land-grabbing.

Of course, no one knows exactly what Russia—or for that matter what America or Britain—will do after the war. But

national interests are a clue to policy and fears may often be allayed by consulting the facts.

What could the Soviets gain by a policy of Red imperialism? More territory? With half of Europe and half of Asia, they have room enough for generations to come, even though they increase at the present rate of ten thousand a day. More raw materials? They have a third of the wheatlands of the world, vast reserves of gold, oil, coal, iron—ample supplies for industries for centuries to come. Investments and concessions in other lands? While the Soviets have granted small loans to Turkey and Mongolia, these are not important because there are no private firms or monopolies with surplus monies. The Soviets have no surplus. There is no overproduction in their setup. Consumption more than keeps pace with production. The money gets into the hands of the people to buy back the goods they make as fast as they make them and a bit faster. This gives Russia an insatiable market at home, absorbing goods like a sponge. Why then should it set out to acquire abroad what it already has in abundance?

It is apparent that none of the usual motives for imperialism exist in Russia. But doesn't the Soviet belief in Revolution provide ideological reasons for aggression? As a socialist state, isn't Russia bound to interfere in the affairs of other countries—in spite of its pledge in the recent treaty with great Britain that both parties would act on "the two principles of not seeking territorial aggrandizement for themselves and of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states"?

The assumption that revolutions can be exported is not in accordance with Soviet theory. Lenin and Stalin have repeatedly said: "Revolutions cannot be carried to other countries in a suitcase." Much less can they be imposed upon them by the bayonets of an invading army. The history and experience of the Russian Revolution itself confirms the truth of that principle. The exile of Trotzky virtually

brought to an end the notion that the Russians must force their ideas and institutions on other peoples.

This does not imply that the Soviets have renounced their principles. To be sure, they hope and expect socialism to spread. They hope it will spread because they hold it provides a final solution of unemployment, strife between races, nations, and classes. They expect it to spread because they believe that one country after another will be forced by failure of capitalism to try socialism. As America rejoices to see any country go republican, so Soviet Russia would rejoice to see any country go socialist.

It is very probable that there will be revolutions in Europe to overthrow the Quislings, the Laval, and the Nazis. Some of these revolutions, because they occur in countries with close geographical and racial ties with the Soviet Union, will probably look to it for their example and guidance, just as other countries will look to the West. As the Scandinavian nations will probably turn to England and America, quite naturally the Slavic nations of the Balkans will turn to Russia.

To sum up in Stalin's words: "Our aims are clear and noble. Our first task is to liberate our own people from the fascist scoundrels. We have no idea of imposing our regime on other peoples, Slav or otherwise. Our aim is to help liberate them from Nazi tyranny and then to leave them free to live in their own lands as they wish."

That brings up the question of Germany. What will be the Russian attitude toward the German people? The untold sufferings and horrors inflicted on them by the Nazis have filled the Soviet peoples with a profound hatred and thirst for vengeance. On the other hand, nurtured in racial tolerance, most of them realize, in the words of Stalin, that, "It would be ridiculous to identify Hitler's clique with the German people . . . and the German state. History shows that Hitlers come and go, but the German people and the German state remains."

Certainly Russia, like the rest of the United Nations, is determined on the overthrow of the Nazis, the Junker military caste, the storm-troop leaders—and perhaps to “liquidate” them in the Russian meaning of that word. They want a regime that would be a guarantee against another military outburst from Germany, and would therefore wish to see Germany move to the left and become even a full-fledged socialist state. But Russia will hardly engage in any revolutionary knight-errantry to bring this about. It would be a thankless task to try to set up an alien government in Germany at the cost of incurring thereby the enmity of England and America. That it wants to avoid for two excellent reasons: It could not bear alone the burden of restoring a Germany that will probably be devastated beyond belief. It wants every possible aid in restoring its own terribly shattered economy. Without either the mood or the means to engage in any revolutionary adventure, the policy of Russia will be dictated by its own national interests and needs.

What are the basic needs of Russia? For the most part they are exactly the same as all other countries. First, Russia needs time and opportunity for the colossal task of post-war reconstruction. Though in the last two decades the Soviets have built much, it is little in comparison with what remains to be done. Take the single item of roads. To construct a system of highways comparable to America's will take from fifty to a hundred years at the present rate. Or go into the interior and see 300,000 villages lacking not only the comforts and amenities of life, but often the bare necessities. The prime reason for this was that up to a third of the national income went into the army and armaments.

Locked in a friendly debate with a Soviet girl on the relative living conditions in England and Russia, Thomas L. Harris said, “At home I have an automobile, a washing machine and an electric refrigerator. Have you any of these things?”

For a moment the girl was nonplussed. Just then a big caterpillar tank came lumbering across the square. Pointing to it, she said: "*Dot!* There is my automobile. There is my washing machine! There is my refrigerator!"

The standard of living, held back in preparing for the war is now further drastically reduced by the war itself. Thousands of schools and hospitals gone up in flames. Millions of homes turned into ashes. Bridges and factories dynamited. Whole cities razed. And along with the destruction of the buildings goes the frightful holocaust of the potential builders. Two million youth already slain and another million maimed, blinded, or legless. Great as are the resources of the Russian land and the recuperative powers of its people, it will take a long time to restore their shattered economy. More than ever will Russia need good relations with foreign lands—the credits, tools and machines that follow in their train.

The second basic need in the words of the Atlantic Charter is "access on equal terms to trade and raw materials." In early years the Soviet Union found itself cut off from credits, boycotted and often totally excluded from the markets of the worlds. As the first "line and shield" of its national economy, it established the Monopoly of Foreign Trade to prevent its markets from being flooded with non-essential goods and its meager capital being sucked out of the country. In this way, in exchange for its grain, gold, furs, and lumber it obtained the metals, machines and engineers essential to its great program of construction. But the advantages were not all one-sided. Thanks to this setup, foreign firms did not have to worry about their Soviet clients becoming bankrupt or repudiating their obligations. They dealt with corporations backed by all the resources of the Soviet State and which in the course of transacting seven billions' worth of business, have not defaulted on a single penny.

While the Soviets attained a high degree of self-sufficiency they in no wise believe in autarchy or isolation. Despite their

wealth of natural resources, they are poor in such things as molybdenum, cobalt and tin; and while they produce rubber, it would be more advantageous to import it along with other tropical goods. They realize that their own progress is accelerated by closer commercial ties with advanced industrial nations. They cite history to show that the conditions existing in their country—an expanding internal market, a rising standard of living and a rising rate of production—are always great stimulants to trading. Finally, in the words of Stalin, they want trading in order “to cement friendly relations with other countries and actually promote a policy of peace.”

The third and most important need of the Soviets now is security against aggression. Among the devices by which nations have sought to insure their safety are “strategic frontiers.” Except in the icy wastes of the North and along the fortress-wall of mountains in the South, the Soviet Union has no natural boundaries, for the great Eurasian plain sweeps on unbroken from the English Channel almost to the Pacific. Strategic frontiers were a problem even for Peter the Great. But now, with the advent of the bombing plane and the giant transport plane, the value of old frontiers is immeasurably reduced. Likewise the importance of that old drive of landlocked Russia towards a warm water port.

But in a war-threatening world, frontiers were important to the Soviet Union and it was essential to push Hitler's springboards as far as possible from its vital centers. For that reason Russia pushed back the Finnish frontier in 1939 and took over those territories wrested from her in the last war. This includes the Baltic States, reincorporated into the Soviet Union by plebiscites; likewise Bessarabia and a part of Poland up to the Curzon line,* repatriating five million Ukrainians and Belorussians.

Quite likely the Soviet Union will want to reconstitute its

*Set by Lord Curzon after the First World War as the ethnological line of demarcation between the Poles to the West and the Belorussians and Ukrainians to the East.

frontiers along these lines. But it is not making this an issue. And it has agreed to negotiate this matter with Poland. As Sumner Welles suggests, the delineation of frontiers will probably be left in abeyance until long after the war. In any case, boundaries are not the first prerequisite for security. No people know this better than the Russians; no people have striven harder to set peace upon a firmer base than strategic frontiers and armaments. The only way for any country to be safe is for all to be safe. For more than a decade Litvinov was a proponent of this idea before the world. At the League of Nations he pleaded for collective sanctions against fascist aggression in Ethiopia, in Spain, in China, and in Czechoslovakia. Just as zealously, he strove for that measure which might have stopped Hitler dead in his tracks—a collective security pact between England, France, and Russia. Tirelessly, he kept reiterating: "Peace is indivisible. All nations keep the peace or all go to war."

This concept, so long ignored or derided, is now almost universally accepted. To its realization in some form all the United Nations are committed. The Anglo-Soviet Treaty of June, 1942, in the words of Molotov, "lays down for the first time basic principles for friendly collaboration between the U.S.S.R. and Great Britain after the war," while the last Lend-Lease agreement between the United States and Russia speaks of "laying the basis of a just and enduring world peace securing order and law to themselves and all nations." Under various Lend-Lease agreements the United Nations are pooling their resources. England, the United States and Canada have set up six powerful Economic Boards to allot on a world-wide scale: Munitions, Shipping, Raw Materials, Products and Resources, Food and Credit. Through Master Agreements 33 countries of the earth are united in a wide-embracing economic pact.

Allocating everything from "ships and tanks to tea and quinine," serving as a clearing-house and shock absorber for half the nations of the globe, Lend-Lease is doing many of the things it was hoped the League of Nations would do. And

it will continue doing them for some time, at least, after the war. While people are debating about the new world order, here may be the embryo out of which it may one day emerge.

As to the political form it will take, the proposals are various. Some advocate a revived League of Nations. Others envisage groups of countries united into Regional Associations—the Americas, Asia, Europe—each responsible for enforcing peace in its part of the world. Still others are for a supernational government with a common police force controlling tariffs, immigration, and with perhaps even a common currency and a common citizenship. In this an individual would be at the same time a citizen of his own town, of his own country and of his own planet.

By its past actions and utterances for the last decade Russia shows that it favors some form of a world federation. More explicitly in its 1941 Treaty with Poland it declares that, "Just and lasting peace can be achieved only through a new organization of international relations on the basis of unification of the democratic countries in a durable alliance. Respect for international law, backed by the collective armed force of all the Allied states must form the decisive factor of such an organization."

This necessity for unified action after the war, as well as during the war, is increasingly stressed by eminent leaders in England and America. Says Thomas W. Lamont, "Does it not become clearer and yet more clear day by day that the only possible ultimate salvation is for Britain, America, Russia, and China to stand together? And if in a generation to come those traditionally ferocious nations, Germany and Japan, are to be stayed from renewed aggression against the world, it will have to be these four great powers which together—and only if they act together—will be able with the United Nations to prevent fresh onslaughts. . . . Their close co-operation is vital to the future peace and stability of the world."

What could Russia contribute to a world federation besides its share of the armed forces?

After immediate relief of the hunger-stricken peoples the first post-war problem to grapple with is that of general poverty and unemployment. This not merely for humane motives ; it is now apparent that no country can enjoy permanent peace and prosperity while others remain poor and depressed. Russia has done away with unemployment, raised the standard of living for great populations of backward, primitive peoples and carried the principles of social security for the individual citizen further than any other country. To a world council intent on solving such problems, Soviet experience would be valuable.

More valuable still would be a study of Russia's methods in dealing with a second and age-old source of wars—the problem of nationality. By satisfying the national interests and aspirations of each it has managed to hold them all together in a single big federation, with all the benefits accruing therefrom. It presents the spectacle of 189 of the most diverse and one-time hostile people and races sending their representatives up to Moscow to debate their common affairs and work out their common problems. In this realm Russia has already done on a considerable scale what must be done on a still larger one.

That leads to a third contribution that Russia might well make to a world council—its experience in large-scale planning and administration. To many people that is a chief obstacle to a federation of nations. Where are brains and the vision to order and organize affairs throughout the world—or even half of it? The Soviets have done just that in one-sixth of the world. Starting from scratch, by trial and error, they have worked out methods, technics of administration, and controls on a colossal scale.

In these fields then of planning, social security, and nationality the Russians can contribute much expert knowledge and experience. And they will do so if they are wanted. But still lurking in the background are the old distrust and fear of Russia. Take some of the more recent fears. First, the

fear that Russia would fight on the wrong side. Then the fear that she would fight badly. Then the fear that, driven back and defeated, she would suddenly quit fighting. Though none of these fears have materialized, so fixed and deep is this old fear pattern that as fast as one proves baseless another crops up. The present one is fear as to what Russia will do after the fighting is over.

What Russia intends to do it has repeatedly enunciated. It is fairly and precisely reflected in statements by Molotov, Stalin and Litvinov. It is set down in the various agreements and treaties with the United Nations. But will Russia live up to them? To that query the reply of Ambassador Davies is "that of all the nations of the earth, none has a finer record" of living up to its treaty promises than the Soviet Union.' But more important than written agreements, as he points out, are mutual understanding, confidence and respect. The Soviets are winning that for themselves by their conduct of the war. They are doing other things, trivial and minor beside that supreme contribution—but evincing the desire and will for full co-operation. They are sending to the United States manganese, formulas for rubber, as well as captured Nazi tires for chemical analysis. They are sending over their specialists, from experts in explosives to crack sharpshooters, putting their battle experience at our disposal. In turn the United Nations are sending to the Soviets in the words of President Roosevelt "everything that can float or fly." For this the Soviets are duly grateful. But any attempts at double dealing—exclusion of Russia from the common councils, evasion of our obligations, letting Russia continue to bear its undue share of the fighting—will stir up the deepest resentment.

After all the Russians are not unlike other peoples. Treat them like human beings and they respond like human beings. Live up to our obligation as partners and allies and they will do likewise. In the last analysis what the Russians do after the war depends largely on what we do during the war.

22. RUSSIA AND AMERICA

Russia's first contracts with America were established by the fur-hunters venturing ever further East after the seals and otters. While today Russia sends thousands of furs to America, 150 years ago, curiously enough, Russia was taking thousands of furs from America. Crossing the Bering Strait the seal hunters pushed their way steadily down to the Farallon Islands off San Francisco. In 1806 Rezanov, the handsome envoy of the Tsar, appeared before the Spanish Governor of California. Obtaining supplies for his starving colony in Alaska, and for himself betrothal to the governor's beautiful daughter, Conception, he sailed away. The long awaiting of her lover's return is the theme of a Bret Harte poem that ends with her learning thirty-six years later that he was killed on his journey back to Saint Petersburg.

Meanwhile, the Russians founded a colony at Fort Ross 98 miles above San Francisco where one may still see the stockade, officers' quarters, and chapel topped by its three-barred cross. Through trading, fishing and ship building, they so entrenched themselves along the Pacific that the Tsar called it a "closed Russian sea." In protest the United States in 1823 proclaimed the Monroe Doctrine, warning European powers that, "We should consider any attempt to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety." The Tsar heard and gave heed out of a desire to maintain the friendly relations so recently established.

At first the Russian autocracy, horrified by the republican regime set up by the American Revolution, would have nothing to do with it. It was a denial of the divine right of

rulers, a dangerous experiment, and doomed to failure. Why recognize it? So the Great Catherine thought when she refused to receive Francis Dana, the first envoy appointed to Russia by Congress. That hostile attitude was stubbornly maintained for thirty-three years, while the United States steadily grew in power and prestige. Forced at last to reconcile herself to the existence of the new republic, Russia in 1809 received its first Minister. He was John Quincy Adams who skillfully cultivated cordial relations between the two nations differing so widely in structure and culture. In course of time, these ripened into a warm tradition of friendship. A firm commercial basis was given to that friendship by the Treaty of 1832 made 'in the name of the Most Holy and Indivisible Trinity.'

It was further strengthened by a series of acts of good will at critical junctures. In the Crimean War the sympathies of America were on the side of the Russian armies fighting against the British. In the Civil War, when the British blockade was threatening, the North was heartened by Russian squadrons sailing into New York and San Francisco. In 1867, Russia gave up Alaska, derisively called an "ice box," which returned, for the \$7,200,000 paid for it, \$400,000,000 in gold dug from its frozen soil.

These last two acts reflect the influence of Cassius Clay, the Kentuckian who voluntarily liberated his slaves and whom Abraham Lincoln therefore selected as the right ambassador to talk with the liberal Tsar Alexander II who was liberating his serfs.

In 1905 President Theodore Roosevelt supported the Japanese in the war against Russia, but in the Peace of Portsmouth he prevailed upon them to mitigate the harsh terms imposed upon the defeated Russians. Meantime, millions of Russians were pouring into America. Their tales of oppression, Jewish pogroms, and Kennan's exposure of the Siberian exile system stirred up feelings of revulsion and protest.

Then in 1917 came the February Revolution, and throughout America the overthrow of Tsarism was hailed with enthusiasm. But with the advent of the Soviets to power in November, 1917, and the Bolsheviks pictured as German agents, assassins and robbers, the Allies sent their armies into Russia. They sought to overthrow the Soviet government with force as it in turn struck back with the counter-measure of appealing to the workers throughout the world by way of the Comintern not to fight against the new socialist state. (For a full exposition see *The Soviets*, pages 459-474). The result of the conflict was, in Lenin's words, "a stalemate." Still believing that the Soviets were doomed to failure and collapse, America did not recognize them. This, however did not prevent a considerable flow of trade between the two countries, and in the meantime the Soviets grew in power and prestige. In 1933 President Franklin Roosevelt expressed his regrets to Moscow, "that these great peoples between whom a happy tradition of friendship existed for more than a century to their mutual advantage" had no direct means of communication.

In response to this overture Maxism Litvinov came to Washington and a formal treaty was negotiated. This was history repeating itself. Russia had been the last to recognize the new democratic state in America. Now in turn America was the last of the Great Powers to recognize the new socialist state of Russia. Among the many motives leading to this step, "the most impelling," said President Roosevelt, "was the desire of both countries for peace and . . . strengthening the peaceful purpose of the civilized world."

The hopes then expressed were doomed to tragic disappointment. One might speculate on how different the world would be today if Litvinov's efforts for a Pact of Collective Security had had the full-hearted backing of the United States. Unfortunately, the spirit of trust and confidence was lacking. There was friction ranging from inability to adjust the claims of old war debts with Soviet counter-claims for

compensation for intervention to resentment against Communist activities. Some were real obstacles but most of them were trivial and imaginary. They were played upon by reactionaries to whom the word "Communist" was anathema; by Soviet-phobes intent on proving that Russia was a Red Hell of barbarism. by demagogues pointing to the Red Menace in any strike for bigger wages or better conditions, or ever extension of municipal ownership.

All this was spurred on by German agents bent upon creating the utmost suspicion and distrust against the Soviets. They did everything possible to widen whatever rifts there were into chasms. Hostility against the Soviets reached its all-time high in 1939 when they made a Treaty of Non-Aggression with Germany. Stalin was assailed as a stooge of Hitler—the Soviets as accomplices and blood brothers of the Nazis conspiring against civilization. Then suddenly the Red Army was locked in deadly combat with the Wehrmacht. Just as suddenly came about a complete reversal in feeling and opinion. Almost overnight Russia was transformed from the enemy of civilization to its champion and savior; and Stalin from an arch villain to the "great warrior-chief of his people."

This reversal rose, not simply out of self-interest in the unexpected acquisition of a new and powerful ally. It was due to a reappraisal of the past in the light of the new situation. Those very actions of the Soviets that had most confused and antagonized public opinion in America now appeared in retrospect as astute far-sighted measures of defense.

The pact with Germany gave the Soviets time to build up their armaments, to equip their factories with high speed steel and precision instruments. The pushing back of the Finnish frontier and the incorporation of the Baltic States gave them outposts against invasion. The purges cleared out hosts of potential as well as actual fifth columnists and diversionists. The Five-Year Plans with all their attendant priva-

tions and hardships gave the Soviets the munitions to carry on this momentous struggle against the Nazis.

All these facts, coupled with the spirit and ability with which they are carrying on the struggle, have produced a great upsurge of sympathy, respect and admiration. Once hostile groups are now friendly. Circles that formerly would hear nothing positive now don't want to listen to anything negative. So far has this gone there is a tendency to say that between the two countries there are no great differences after all. This in one way is a great gain. Nevertheless, there are certain differences in life, in institutions and outlook. Quite likely Russians may do things to startle and shock Americans and *vice versa*. In the long run instead of blinking at the differences, it may be better to recognize them and to try to understand their nature, and how they came to be.

Take, for example, a major issue, the question of freedom. One hears there is "no freedom in Russia." Yet while we sing, "Sweet land of liberty," millions of Russians are marching to the front, singing, "In all the earth, where breathes a man so brave and free" And it is true, the Soviet Union offers and secures certain freedoms enjoyed in no other country. In no other country in the world is the Negro or Mongolian less handicapped by reason of his color, or are Jews so utterly exempt from the evils of anti-Semitism. In no other country are the doors open wider to men and women of ability no matter how lovely their birth. In no other country are the workers better insured against enforced idleness, illness, and old age. "And what liberty," asks Stalin, "can there be for a man in danger of losing his job, his home and bread?" To the Soviets, economic rights and security are fundamental to everything else. These are written into the Soviet constitution guaranteeing to each citizen the opportunity to work, to education, to leisure. This is the gist of the Soviet concept of freedom. It means the presence of opportunity—freedom *for* something.

To Americans freedom primarily implies absence of re-

strain. It means freedom *from* something—the right of each man to think, do, say and go as he pleases without interference. We don't like secret police, arbitrary arrests, officials prying into our affairs pushing us about, telling us what to do. Neither, for that matter, do the Russians like them. No people have a keener sense of their own worth and personality.

No people enjoy more expressing their ideas and feelings or gathering together to voice their complaints and grievances. That's one reason why the new Constitution defining these rights was hailed throughout the country with so much enthusiasm. Among its unique articles are a Bill of Economic Rights, a Bill of Racial Rights and a Bill of Duties. After that, as in the Constitution of the United States, comes a Bill of Personal and Political Rights, even more explicitly defined than in the Constitution of the United States. Here to every citizen is guaranteed all the freedoms—speech, press, worship and assembly—everything up to “inviolability of his home and secrecy of correspondence.”

Excellent in theory, say the critics, but there is little evidence of these rights in practice. At best, they represent the Soviet's aims and aspiration rather than realities. That is true, likewise, of many ideals written into the Constitution of the United States.

In 1789 we proclaimed the equality of all peoples before the law. But it was seventy-five years before the Negroes were granted their rights as citizens and voters; and in some areas they are still more honored in the breach than in the observance. In 1919 Lenin declared that in the “immediate future” all citizens would enjoy the right of suffrage. But it took seventeen years before that was achieved. Time and circumstance likewise have their bearing upon those evils so much deplored in Russia—censorship, secret trials, concentration camps, restrictions on foreign travel, attempts to “freeze” workers to their jobs.

To similar measures the democracies likewise tend to re

sort as we get deeper into the war. "If we are to have any liberty into the future, we must suffer certain restriction on our present liberties. "We accept them, justifying them as defensive measures taken under threat of invasion from our enemies.

Under such a threat, the Soviet Union has been living for the past ten years, facing on one frontier the strongest military power in the world, and often in actual combat with the second strongest on the other frontier. It is as if Canada and Mexico were hostile fascist states—only ten times more powerful than they are—with millions of armed men on our borders.

In such circumstances, imperiled from all sides, infested with foreign agents and spies, without any traditions of political freedom, and with millions of nomads and peasants scarcely able to read and write, driving at top speed and terrible sacrifices to prepare for the inevitable conflict, the Soviets nevertheless wrote this bill of civil liberties into their constitution. That in itself may be rated as a considerable achievement. To be noted, also, is the fact that the extent to which its provisions have been put into effect was in direct relation to the external danger. In each period of relative safety there has been an extension of the area of freedom and the practices of democracy.

Bearing this in mind, what may be expected from a peace that would bring security to the Soviet Union? Unless one assumes that freedom is incompatible with a highly socialized state, or that, while other countries are changing, Russia remains static, it seems reasonable to look forward to a large and perhaps rapid evolution in the direction of greater freedom and democracy. In that case, the Soviets would be closer to American concepts and peacetime practices in this field. On the other hand in such fields as planning, social security, and racial attitude, it may be that America will be closer to Soviet ideas and practice.

But some differences are bound to remain. One may stress

them as in the past to the detriment of the interests of America and Russia. Or in the interests of better relations one may dwell upon their similarities. For there are striking likenesses, and many ways in which the two countries are alike. Both countries are "the melting pots" of many races and nationalities. Both are big in territory, in populations and natural resources, which in turn imparts a certain largeness of mind and spirit to their peoples. Both are proud of their revolutionary origin, and both, after passing through the throes of bitter civil war, embarked on a period of astounding industrial development. Both believe in the power of modern science and technology to bring about an economy of plenty for the material well-being of all.

As striking as are these resemblances in history, geography and industry, the two countries are not less alike in their aims and character, in the ethical and democratic spirit of their peoples. Neither is based on a caste or privileged group; but, believing with profound faith in the character, worth and capacity of the common man, both are dedicated to the interests of all the people. Both are without grandiose scheme of world empire; in the words of Ralph Barton Perry, they are "opposed alike to the Nazi goal of enslaved masses by a master-class, and of enslaved nation by a master-race."

Besides these grounds making for greater unity, sympathy and understanding, is one thing more the two peoples have in common. Each has good reason to be grateful for service rendered the other. Certainly the Soviet people are aware on the whole of the good will and good intentions of the Americans. True, we took part in intervention in 1918, but while other countries were counting upon dividing up the skin and carcass of the Russian bear, we insisted on the territorial integrity of Russia. We sent our army into Siberia along with the other Allies; but against the Japanese, who wanted to remain, we exerted such pressure that they, too, were compelled to withdraw. We gave no credits to the Soviets

for the building up of the country, but we sent thousands of our best engineers, technicians and architects. So efficiently and conscientiously did they perform their tasks that not one was ever accused of sabotage and they won the respect and admiration of all. We long withheld recognition from the Soviets, but when the great famine of 1919 swept through the Ukraine and the Valley of the Volga, we sent our food and medicine to the value of sixty-six million dollars. Rescuing countless victims from starvation, in the words of H. H. Fisher, "made for America a unique place in the hearts of millions of Russian people."

How firmly America holds that place in their affections I found on my last visit to Russia. Journeying back from the Volga, I came at nightfall to an Old Believers' village, still clinging to its old dress and customs. A half-hour after the village grapevine announced the arrival of an American, came a knock at my door. There stood a patriarch with a long, white beard flowing down over his long black kaftan; behind him, two younger men bearing a trencher covered with a gay, embroidered towel. On it was a huge loaf of bread and a pile of salt—*khleb-sol*—the symbols of hospitality with which they have paid honor to visitors from time immemorial. Bowing low, and making the sign of the cross with two fingers, the elder spoke :

"We give welcome! Twenty years ago we and our wives and our children and our cattle were dying of hunger. We ate grass and roots and the straw from our roofs. It seemed that even God had forgotten us! But in that black hour, America heard our cry. Over the far seas you came, bringing bread for our bodies and courage to our hearts. May God's blessing and our blessings be on all Americans."

Again Russia is in desperate plight, scourged by an enemy more terrible than any since the Tatars ravaged the land. Again in response to their need, out of America in steady procession sail the ships laden with tanks, airplanes and munitions. And with them go the ships of mercy laden with

food, milk, clothes and medicaments. To tens of thousands they are granting reprieve from suffering and death, saving children from going barefoot in the snow; alleviating the torments of the wounded; restoring invalid soldiers to the fighting front; putting courage into the hearts of the people to go on with the struggle; storing up a fund of good will and gratitude.

Conversely, America has good reasons for good will and gratitude to the Soviets. Above all stands the steadfast resistance of the Red Armies, giving to America that respite and breathing spell so imperative for mobilizing its industries and military forces. In recognition of the inestimable value of this are the sincere, full and generous tributes pouring forth in the press and pulpit and radio

"Who can exaggerate what the Russians have done for us in fighting and wearing down 300 Nazi divisions in the West. and at the same time the holding back of 30 to 40 Japanese divisions from action in the Pacific?"

"Every one of the millions of German soldiers, tanks and planes destroyed by Russians is just one less to be pitted against our armies in the West "

"In their defense of Moscow and Leningrad, the Russians are fighting in defense of New York and Washington."

With this evaluation of the Soviets' military prowess and service goes a new evaluation of their achievements in industry, farming, education, and science. There is a better understanding likewise that between the two countries exists no fundamenal conflict of interests ; on the contrary, there are countless reasons for collaboration

To their mutual advantage this is now taking place, engendering a spirit of mutual good will that bodes well for the future, when in the words of Maxim Litvinov, "the two countries which have been companions in arms will, after the war, be busied with the common tasks of reconstruction."

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